“Our cities need to work for everyone; they need common ground to come together. For people of faith, this work comes from a deep conviction about what it means to seek the shalom of the city: it means not separating physical change from spiritual change.”

—NICOLE HIGGINS (MA '10, STORY ON P. 12)
Makoto Fujimura is director of Fuller’s Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts; see more of his work on pp. 76–77 and 98–99.

Painted at Brehm | Fujimura Studio in Pasadena, California, Silence and Beauty was completed with the help of Fujimura Fellows, a mentorship program that empowers students to embody Culture Care values. This diptych exists at the intersection of silence—including the novel of the same name—and the ways exile shapes creative practices. Explore these topics more online.
This scripture from Jeremiah is the right reflection for this significant time: it’s been 70 years since our seminary’s founder, Charles E. Fuller, launched classes in Pasadena. To honor that 70th anniversary, we are sharing resources from our archives throughout the year that celebrate the history, scholarship, accomplishments, and impact that define the Fuller legacy. Though I have only been at Fuller for four years, I find these resources and reflections very moving as a member of the institution that Charles Fuller gave so much of himself to serve. In the 1940s, Fuller was reaching thousands through his popular radio broadcast, The Old Fashioned Revival Hour. When he dreamed of spreading the gospel even further through a new school that would train young evangelists, his friend Harold John Osenga, a pastor and theologian, encouraged him to broaden that vision. The church, he said, needed pastors who were intellectually sound and culturally attuned as well as solidly evangelical.

When the two men and four other evangelical scholars met to pray about this vision, they heard God’s strong call—and Fuller Theological Seminary was born, a “center for evangelical scholarship” that would resist separation and be a force for the renewal and broadening of evangelicalism. In September 1947, Fuller Seminary’s inaugural group of 39 students attended classes in the kindergarten Sunday school rooms of Lake Avenue Congregational Church—sitting in child-sized chairs as they learned from a charter faculty of theological giants: Everett Harrison, Carl F. H. Henry, Harold Lindseth, and Wilbur Smith.

Jeremiah 33:3 was Charles Fuller’s life verse when he started his radio program in 1934, and later when he opened the doors to Fuller Seminary. It is an appropriate scripture to guide us as we celebrate this anniversary and look forward to new opportunities for Fuller’s future. We are strategically retooling for a different world: offering fully online degree programs, rethinking regional campus functions, and restructuring the seminary around four areas—graduate programs, leadership formation, mission advancement, and operations—to strengthen our organizational effectiveness.

Chief among this season’s innovations is the new FULLER Leadership Platform, which will facilitate learning and formation in a variety of formats—from professional certificates to cohorts, classes, and more in addition to our traditional degrees. As always, whether through formation groups, centers of innovation, consulting, or career development, Fuller’s world-class scholarship consistently drives all we do.

For me, it has been important to remember the courageous and creative leadership of those who have gone before us at Fuller, pressing into the seminary’s rich history in ways that will guide us in responding to the needs of the church and our world in the future. As we enter into a new season burgeoning with possibility, I am trusting God to show us great and mighty things for another 70 years.

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” (Jer 33:3 KJV)
12 Start with Coffee
Nicole Higgins addresses the social divisions of Orlando through grassroots organizing—springing from a network of local coffee shops.

18 The End of the World as She Knew It
The suicide of her father sends Erin Dunkerly on a path of shock and grief, with a commitment to work toward prevention.

24 This Is What It Means to Wash Someone’s Feet
A passion for mental health and the homeless leads Ana Wong McDonald to help create holistic services on Los Angeles’s Skid Row.

28 Limping Toward Sunrise
Kutter Callaway reflects on his chronic spinal pain and the difficulty of finding faith in the midst of suffering.

32 In Transit
Aaron Moore’s winding journey takes him to unexpected transportation work in the high desert—and a vocation that uses all his gifts.

38 The Shalom for Which We Yearn
W. Y. Youn, Senior Theology Editor

40 Shalom as Wholeness: Embracing the Broad Biblical Message
Leslie S. Allen

44 The Church in a Time of Conflict: Bringing Shalom to Persons in Situations of Internal Displacement in Colombia
Lisseth Raja-Flores

50 Embodied Shalom: Making Peace in a Divided World
Jer Swigart

52 Kerygmatic Peacebuilding as the Practice of Biblical Shalom
Martin Accad

60 Shalom Justice
Githa R. Gaha

66 Shalom as the Dual Approach of Peacemaking and Justice-Seeking: The Case of South Korea
Sebastian C. H. Kim

70 Passing the Peace: A Pneumatology of Shalom
Patrick Oden

78 Scripture
84 Wisdom
90 Preaching

DEPARTMENTS
8 From Mark Labberton, President
98 New Faculty
99 Recent Faculty Books and Publications
100 Benediction

About Fuller Theological Seminary
¿El Shalom de Quién?

The beauty of the vision itself may explain why shalom often seems like a tantalizing and elusive dream. While containing some of our deepest longings and hopes, shalom is at once deeply desired and never fully experienced. It describes what God’s grace intends, while the ordinary world of discord, violence, and broken relationships rolls unresolved. Shalom? By all means. When? Where? Living in the tension of “what is” and “what will be” is the ground of everyday life for followers of Jesus. Shalom underscores that we have been given a foretaste but not the final fruit. By faith, we see the determination and means by which God pursues the making of shalom in the long narrative of God’s story with Israel. At many points, the story moves along as it does because God promotes shalom even as Israel subverts it. Abraham, Moses, and David know the promises of God’s shalom, and each tends de discordanza, violencia y relaciones cotas se asa sin resolución. ¿Shalom? Por supuesto. ¿Cuándo? ¿Dónde? Vivir en la tensión de “qué es” y “qué será” es el fundamento de la vida diaria para las personas que siguen a Cristo. El Shalom destaca que se nos ha dado un anticipo, pero no el fruto final. Por fe, vemos la determinación y los medios por los cuales Dios persigue la creación del Shalom en la larga narrativa de la historia de Dios con Israel. En muchos momentos, la historia se mueve como lo hace debido a que Dios promueve el Shalom aun cuando Israel lo subvirtió. Abraham, Moses y David conocen las promesas del Shalom de Dios, y cada uno conoce y soporta esa esperanza. Los profetas declaran el gran anhelo de Dios por la rectitud y la justicia — elementos vitales del Shalom — pero lo hacen en el contexto de la preocupación de Israel con sus propios sueños errantes. La filosofía de Dios
witness that shalom is no idealist fantasy, but rather the gritty, tangible life that God’s shalom makes present and possible through love. Here is raw evidence that shalom must heal us; but more than that, for shalom to be established, it must overcome our insistence on our own terms rather than God’s. We want shalom in the absence of our enemies, for example, while God’s shalom is only possible in the company of our enemies, too.

The realization of God’s shalom remains elusive—maybe even fantastic—because we reject the requirements of shalom. We don’t want to lay down arms. We don’t want peace if it is not the kind of peace we want. We don’t want communion and well-being unless we can have it our own way and on our own terms.

That’s not the shalom Jesus has come to make. While ours is an unfulfilled dream, the shalom of Jesus is a reality into which we refuse to live. So whose shalom will we seek?

La realización del Shalom de Dios permanece elusiva—tal vez hasta fantástica—porque rechazamos los requisitos del Shalom. No queremos bajar los brazos. No queremos paz sino es la clase de paz que queremos. No queremos comunión y bienestar a menos que los tengamos a nuestra manera y en nuestros propios términos.

Eso no es el Shalom que Jesús vino a hacer. Mientras el nuestro es un sueño incumplible, el Shalom de Jesús es una realidad en la cual nos reusamos vivir. Así que, ¿cuál Shalom buscaremos?

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START WITH COFFEE

Nicole Higgins (MA ‘10), standing in front of a map of Orlando at CREDO, a coffee shop and nonprofit that works to heal divisions in the local community.
Walking into CREDO in Orlando, Florida, is not so different from walking into any other coffee shop. The buzz of grinding coffee beans fills the air; pastries tantalize from their case on the counter. Depending on which of CREDO’s four locations it happens to be, there might be professionals grabbing a drink en route to a meeting or artists sitting at a table collaborating on their latest project.

The difference starts to reveal itself when the barista asks, “How much do you want to pay for your coffee today?” Prices range from $2 to $4—buyer’s choice. Customers are introduced to their coffee as much for its story as for its flavor. Café de la Esperanza, for example, was grown and sun-dried in the Quiché region of Guatemala, an area once ravaged by a 36-year civil war, the barista explains. Each coffee plant is hand-cultivated, pressed, and sold at fair wages to protect workers’ rights and bolster the economy.

The addition of this narrative, degrees of separation between coffee grower and coffee drinker start to dissolve. A seemingly small decision can bring a personal connection, explains CREDO staff member Nicole Higgins [MACCS ’10] with unconcealed delight: “We’re inviting people to be stakeholders on a global issue at a very local level.”

Nicole is all about fostering personal connections, doing so with a degree of enthusiasm that’s contagious. Those connections begin first thing in the morning as she greets regular CREDO customers by name, and they extend into work that reaches far beyond selling coffee. In her role as “Rally Director,” Nicole energetically leads an effort that distinguishes CREDO from other cafés much more than their story sharing and name-your-own-price approach: she helps CREDO partner with and “rally” community members to bring positive social change to downtown Orlando. Partnerships have included a bike rally with the Parramore Kidz Zone, monthly trash pickups with Keeping Orlando Beautiful, and mentoring kids alongside the Boys & Girls Club. Nicole’s love for personal connections comes to the fore as she mobilizes “Rally Makers”—individuals and organizations who pool their resources and expertise to nurture new social enterprises in the city.

For Nicole, working at CREDO fulfills a deep passion to “seek the welfare of the city” through physical and spiritual renewal. Her own journey, in fact, mirrors CREDO’s mission statement:

“A life of impact usually starts with steps so small they seem silly, so small that the momentum of our life always seems to carry us away from them. It’s only when we rally together that we’re able to overcome that momentum, reject our tendency toward apathy, and impact our city, world, and selves for good.”

Nicole took her own early steps toward a life of impact when she came to Fuller for a cross-cultural studies degree, bringing with her a passion to change the inner city that naturally led to community organizing. “Our cities need to work for everyone,” she says; “they need common ground to come together.” Inspired and supervised by Associate Professor of Urban Mission Jude Tiernan Watson, Nicole worked with Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE-LA) to help organize religious communities in Los Angeles around economic issues, exploring ways to provide community members access to the life they want. “For people of faith, this work comes from a deep conviction about what it means to seek the shalom of the city,” she says: “It means not separating physical change from spiritual change.”

During her time at Fuller, Nicole found more than an opportunity to impact the city. She found a like-minded academic family where friendships came quickly and easily. She learned how to generously support others while also receiving support for herself. When it was time to graduate and move on, Nicole was tempted to turn away from her internal drive to make an impact beyond the life she had created in Los Angeles. Nicole resisted that temptation—rejecting, in the words of her future employer’s mission statement, “a tendency toward apathy”—and moved across the country to join the Christian advocacy group Sojourners in Washington, DC.
after a year doing work there that focused on higher-level, structural change, she felt the pull toward something else. “I was itching for the grassroots life,” she says, but wasn’t sure what that would look like. She returned to her hometown of Orlando for a time of transition, wanting to discern what this next thing might be that she felt called to but couldn’t yet define.

A friend and fellow Fuller alum, Matt Winkles, stepped in with an answer. He told her about a coffee shop his brother-in-law, Ben, had started in downtown Orlando, with the goal of not just serving coffee but looking for ways to bring social change to the city. The idea excited Nicole: “I thought, ‘Man, I love community work—let’s change Orlando!’ When I told Ben I really aligned with CREDO’s mission, he said, ‘Cool, but can you make coffee?’” Nicole realized her first role with CREDO would mean staying inside to run the coffee shop—but it was an important step toward impacting the city. “I came to see that, at CREDO, everything starts in the coffee shop—getting to know our customers and making the personal connections that could help us make a difference in the community,” she says. After two years, as those relationships grew and CREDO expanded the breadth of its work, Nicole took on the newly formed position of Rally Director—which indeed takes her out into the community daily to nurture social change.

Now she starts her day with a coffee at CREDO, but may later be found meeting with a donor who wants to support a new social enterprise, helping organize a cooking class for neighborhood kids, or working with local leaders to put on a community parade. CREDO’s work in the community goes in lots of directions, but that suits Nicole just fine. “Eight years after I first fell in love with community work I’m actually doing the things I set out to do,” she says, “but it looks different than I imagined.”

In many ways, what Nicole does is exceeding her imagination: building relationships at a grassroots level in ways that can make a bigger structural impact. One project she’s excited about focuses on downtown Orlando’s Division Avenue—a street that has historically and literally divided racial and economic groups in Orlando. Nicole is working with her contacts to host a dinner that will bring together local residents, elected officials, and even the mayor to discuss the social impact of this street. “People have talked about renaming the street, but isn’t that just a cosmetic fix?” Nicole asks. “We need to address some of the more fundamental issues in the neighborhood, have the longer conversation about it, and this dinner will help do that.” “CREDO is in a place to move forward conversations like this because we’re part of so many different networks of people in Orlando now,” she says. “I can approach a local chef, or others I know who host dinner parties, and say hey, you’re really good at this—would you like to help? I ran into the chief of the fire department last week and said, by the way, we’re doing this dinner on Division Avenue—can we use your kitchen? It’s just a block away!” With her brilliant smile and unrestrained enthusiasm, Nicole undoubtedly gets a “yes” much more often than not to requests such as these. As she wholeheartedly embraces projects like the Division Avenue discussion, Nicole feels, for the first time since she was at Fuller, a strong desire to settle down and stay in one place. But this time her life’s momentum is helping her carry out the work she feels called to. Rather than overcoming its force, it is time, she feels, to give in to it.

For Nicole, this means learning to carry out the last part of CREDO’s mission statement—to seek the welfare of not only the city and world, but also herself. She is letting herself be impacted by the community around her: forging deeper connections with her neighbors, learning to both give and receive support. She is discovering that working toward the welfare of the city is a mutual endeavor, a partnership that strengthens both parties. When asked what one thing she has learned about God through her time in Orlando, Nicole answers with the same passion that is evident in the work she does: “When it comes to God, there’s room for everyone.”

“A life of impact usually starts with steps so small they seem silly: so small that the momentum of our life always seems to carry us away from them. It’s only when we rally together that we’re able to overcome that momentum, reject our tendency toward apathy, and impact our city, world, and selves for good.”

—CREDO Mission Statement
Rick Dunkerly was a free spirit. He was an idealist and an agitator. He wrote poems and letters to the editor. He rescued Collies and rooted for the underdog. He taught Bible studies at his church and dove deep into the book of Revelation. He dearly loved his four daughters.

But he was not well. At times, he struggled with alcoholism, diabetes, and depression; he struggled to maintain family relationships. He lost a decades-long career post and saw his long marriage fall apart. He worked part-time here and there, but the income wasn’t enough. He made several suicide attempts. In his final months he became homeless, living in his car and in motels or staying with friends.

While working at a call center he was robbed at gunpoint, the assailant cornering him in a men’s restroom. He was prescribed ten sessions of counseling and the event was considered to be resolved.

Two months later, on August 6, 2006, Rick drove himself to a dog park in San Dimas, California. He sat behind the wheel, pulled out a gun found in his friend’s dresser drawer, and shot himself. He was 59.

Suicide stories like Rick’s provoke complex feelings in each of us, a disquieting mix of grief and anger and helplessness. We ask ourselves what could have been done to avoid this. Lacking answers and recourse, some conclude that nothing could have changed the early ending to Rick’s life; he was one of those who needed the most help but wouldn’t take it. Erin Dunkerly [MAICS ’03] would disagree with those assumptions.

Rick was Erin’s father and her best friend. She was devoted to him, and he to her. One Christmas before he died, she sneaked into his apartment when he was gone and delivered a Christmas tree, complete with ornaments, lights, and a tin angel holding a banner that said “Peace.” He pried the halo off that angel and kept it on display all year long.

The two of them remained in close contact while Erin studied at Fuller’s Pasadena campus in the early 2000s. Erin intended to go into the field of international development after graduation—but at Fuller, as she worked first for the provost and then the Brehm Center, she began to recognize her own administrative gifts. She would often meet with her father over a meal, brainstorming about next steps in his future and smiling at his contrarian quips and political wisecracks. Yet, while the next steps in his vocational journey remained foggy, there he sat in front of her, clearly needing support himself. At times there seemed to be a reversal of roles between parent and child. Once she had to intervene by dismantling his car engine when he threatened to drive drunk from Whittier up to Pismo Beach. She lent him money when he couldn’t make ends meet.

The day her father died, before she learned what happened, Erin felt strange—almost a premonition she would later attribute to a primal and profound bond between parent and child. Having entered law school after Fuller, she was busy externing for a federal judge, and it had been about a month since she and her dad had last spoken. With her 30th birthday a week away, she thought about how she wanted to see him, maybe go to a movie together. But she decided she’d call him the following day.

Late that night, Erin’s doorbell rang. “Police!” said a voice from outside the door. The voice belonged to a woman who was in fact a death investigator from the Los Angeles Coroner’s Office. She broke the devastating news to Erin and spoke with her for about 30 minutes, tactfully asking questions to rule out the possibility of a homicide. Reflecting on the experience, Erin noted, “It’s really amazing how your brain and body work during a moment like that. The shock of it all. After the investigator explained what had happened, I asked, ‘Well, is he okay?’”

That night, Erin, still reeling from shock, had to tell the rest of her family. She phoned her mother and sister, who lived up in the Pacific Northwest, and then had a friend drive her through midnight’s blackness to both Whittier and Simi Valley where her two younger sisters lived. Later that week she

the end of the world as she knew it
“But those left behind after a suicide—we have already lost our loved ones, and we are just trying to prevent others from sharing in that same pain.”
bolstered her bantam frame with oversized courage and went to the coroner’s office with a friend to reclaim the possessions found on her father’s body. She went to an evidence yard in San Dimas where they had preserved his car exactly as it was found. The radio was still on; the blood remained. She and her family parsed out a suicide note that ended: “I was too tender for this world.” In reflecting on the experience, Erin writes, “My father shot himself, and the bullet hit everyone. It hit me, my sisters, my mother, our extended family, his friends, and radiated to others. It’s frightening. It’s bloody. It’s stigmatizing. It was the end of the world as I knew it.”

Why would Erin disagree, then, with the notion that suicides cannot be prevented? Because, as she got involved with suicide-prevention organizations such as All Saints Pasadena’s Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, she learned that view was simply not true. For every person who commits suicide, there are numerous others who have seriously considered but avoided taking their lives. (See sidebar to learn more.)

Erin believes that a community in action can make the world tender enough for people like her father to go on living. They can individually and collectively give tin angels that bear peace for the mentally ill or addicted. Before her father died, this meant remaining connected to him despite his brokenness, an approach to family Erin feels was shaped by her time at Fuller, especially by voices of brokenness, an approach to family Erin feels was shaped by her time at Fuller, especially by voices that were loving community that made it possible even unto the end of the world.”

In one of his books he says, “Adolf Hitler dies a lonely death in light of her faith, she explains, “You know, this story is not a clean narrative. I identify with the theologian Frederick Buechner, whose own
derived his work from the Fuller community. “The Lutheran church where she grew up held a memorial service for the family. “When you’re in mourning, it’s lovely to have that parade of people come and gather and remember and do the potluck lunch. People who know the importance of attending funerals, You remember them forever,” she says. Likewise, Erin drew strength from the Fuller community. “The President’s Cabinet sent me a card. Russ Spittler and Rich Mouw continued to check in with me,” she says of the former provost and president, her voice breaking. “I was more to them than just someone who worked there.”

After graduating from Loyola Law School, Erin became a defense-side civil litigator for a firm in South Pasadena. As she represents public entities, her work has taken her back to the same building where she retrieved her father’s possessions after his suicide — and painful memories return. She knows that the grief will remain, surging and subsiding, for the rest of her life. When asked to reflect on her father’s death in light of her faith, she explains, “You know, this story is not a clean narrative. I identify with the theologian Frederick Buechner, whose own father killed himself when Buechner was just a boy. In one of his books he says, “Adolf Hitler dies a suicide in his bunker with the Third Reich going up in flames all around him, and what God is saying about the wages of sin seems clear enough. . . . But what is God saying through a good man’s suicide?” I don’t really know what God is saying, but I know he’s working through it. Even in the midst of the worst crisis, if I listen, I hear, ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

Suicide is preventable. Addressing the warning signs we may see in those we know starts with understanding some of the facts:

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. More than 46,000 people die by suicide in the United States annually — meaning that, on average, there are 123 suicides per day.

Nearly 25 percent of those who die by suicide have a mental disorder at the time of their deaths. Biological and psychological treatments can help address the underlying health issues that put them at risk.

In 2015, the highest suicide rate was among adults 60 to 64 years old. The second highest was in those 85 years or older. Younger groups have had consistently lower suicide rates than middle-aged and older adults.

Men die by suicide 3.5 times more often than women, and white males accounted for 7 of 10 suicides in 2015.

Half (50 percent) use a firearm. Two-thirds of all gun deaths in America are suicides.

For every suicide, there are nearly 300 people who have moved past serious thoughts about killing themselves.

For every suicide, there are nearly 80 who have survived a suicide attempt, the overwhelming majority of whom will go on to live out their lives.

If you are concerned about someone you know, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255.
When Ana Wong McDonald (PhD ’99) was a young girl growing up in Hong Kong, her grandmother would walk her to school every day through streets marked by suffering and poverty. “There was one old woman who was always carrying a heavy pole across her shoulders with baskets on it,” she recalls, “and a man with leprosy who had lost some of his limbs—my grandmother often stopped and gave him food.” Witnessing this had an impact on young Ana, and a seed of compassion was planted.

Decades later, in the early 2000s, another of her daily walks caused that seed to sprout in Ana. Working as a community psychologist for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Center in Hollywood, Ana parked in a staff lot several blocks away from her office. Every day on her way there and back, she was again a witness to suffering as the many homeless individuals on those streets stretched out their hands to ask for spare change. “I remember thinking, ‘I need to do something about this,’” she says, the compassion in her dark brown eyes reflecting the depth of her care. “That was when I saw clearly in myself a calling to the homeless and the depth of my care.”

But there was a love for words, a sense of music, a connection to the seen and unseen. “I was a musician, teaching piano and serving as choir director at my church. My students and choir members, though, saw her as more than a music teacher, often coming to her for advice about personal problems. At church, people would sometimes approach me and ask, can we talk? Ana remembers, and after a while, she became the church’s unofficial lay counselor.

“People at church started telling me, ‘You really need to study psychology!’ As I thought about it, I agreed—but knew it had to be a Christian program.” Ana decided to pursue a PhD at Fuller’s School of Psychology because, she says, “Fuller had the depth of integration I was looking for. I didn’t want to be a psychologist who is a Christian. I see myself as a Christian first and foremost, then a psychologist. My faith lies at the core of all I do.”

Longtime professor of psychology Richard Gorsuch became Ana’s mentor and deepest influence. “It wasn’t just because he was a research guru,” she says of the late professor; “it was the small things. In my first year, I remember a research colloquium where a student came late; Dr. Gorsuch gave that student his chair and sat on the floor. It was things like that—his humility, his servant heart—that spoke volumes to me, even more than his academic brilliance.” Dr. Gorsuch continued to be a mentor and a friend to Ana long after she graduated, and she keeps a small pillow he brought back to her from an overseas mission trip in her office, to remind her of him and his influence. “He hiked up a mountain for over eight hours to minister to and live among people in regions without electricity, running water, or transportation,” Ana recounts. “His sacrifice and model for serving the needy impacted me deeply.”

Today Ana carries that influence to her newest post, at Los Angeles Christian Health Centers (LACHC) on LA’s Skid Row, where she is again doing what she loves: building a more collaborative, holistic program for the primarily homeless clientele they serve. Hired in 2015 by Wayne Aoki, her former professor at Fuller and then-director of LACHC’s mental health services, Ana knew she was in the right place when Wayne took her to lunch at the Los Angeles Mission across the street. “When I walked into that cafeteria with 80 or 100 homeless people, I sat with them, ate with

This is what it means to wash someone’s feet.
them, looked into their faces—saw all the suffering, the need, the potential there—and I thought, I’m home. This is where I belong!”

Now, as LACHC’s mental health director herself, Ana is working with others at the clinic—medical doctors, dentists, social service providers—to find a deeper level of healing for the emotional trauma nearly all their clients bring through LACHC’s doors. “A child might come into the clinic with asthma, and we’ll often find out her symptoms stem from forces in her family environment—abuse, seeing domestic violence,” she explains. “We need to communicate across disciplines and address problems like these together—to look at the whole person.”

Holistic support also means, for Ana, doing whatever needs to be done for a client. That might be, at the end of a counseling session, looking up bus timetables and giving step-by-step directions to the elderly, visually impaired client who has a court date the next day and doesn’t know how to get there. Or it might be, when a client shows up in a thin t-shirt on a cold winter day, walking him across the street to the LA Mission and helping him find a jacket to wear. “It’s not part of therapy or treatment, but this is what it means to wash someone’s feet,” she says with conviction in her voice. “If you’re going to be in ministry, you do what it takes to help the person in need.”

Committed as she is to footwashing, Ana is most enlivened when she’s building a program that multiplies that commitment—programs that lead many people to heal, thrive, wash one another’s feet, and continue doing so whether she is present or not. Most telling, perhaps, is her joy in relating a story from her days at the Hollywood Mental Health Center, where she instituted an optional weekly spirituality group for clients to explore issues of faith. One member, a young girl with a history in the sexual industry, shared with the group that a man had offered to give her a salon makeover in exchange for meeting him in his apartment. “The other women in the group listened to her respectfully,” Ana shares, “and very lovingly, one of the women said, ‘Well, I’ve been fixing my daughter’s hair and makeup for years. Come to my house—I’ll fix your hair for you and do your makeup.’ And then another woman said, ‘I’ll bring pizza—we’ll make it a women’s night!’”

“That group came together around her to gently tell her, you don’t need to do those dangerous things, we’ll be there for you. They did this on their own accord, without me,” says Ana with visible delight. “It was beautiful to watch it unfold.”

Ana has another childhood memory of her grandmother that turned out to be providential. When she was four years old, her grandmother told her she should be a doctor one day, because “it’s always good to help heal people,” she recalls. “After that I remember praying, ‘God, help me to grow up to be a doctor, like my grandmother said.’ God was faithful,” Ana says now with tears in her eyes, “even to the prayer of a four-year-old.”
I am sitting in what could be the waiting room of any neurosurgeon’s office in the country. Trying to look “normal” and to distract myself from the searing pain in my body, I scan the room. In one corner, a man engages in an important business deal on his cell phone. I imagine him to be a powerful executive meting out daily tongue-lashings to interns and inept junior colleagues. But the forceful, even authoritative tone of his voice is belied by his posture. Whereas the volume of his rant would suggest a wildly gesticulating speaker, he barely moves. Sitting only in the most abstract sense, his back is contorted into a grotesque arch with the top of his head flat against the wall—his chair serving only as a platform where his paralyzing pain plays out.

To his left, another man has abandoned his seat altogether and is on his hands and knees, calmly attempting to read a magazine while rhythmically shifting his body back and forth to mitigate pain. The periodical he attempts to read rests serenely on the chair he is no longer able to occupy. Just then, the elevator dings and a woman in a wheelchair emerges from behind the stainless-steel doors. I do not know her, but I know the hollow look in her eyes that comes with being consumed by pain. An unyielding force appears to have swallowed her whole.

Much like my waiting room neighbors, I too suffer from chronic pain. For more than a decade now, I have been living with a degenerative disc disorder and spinal stenosis, which means that the narrowing of my spinal canal and the herniated discs in my neck radiate severe pain to my back, chest, shoulder, arm, and hand. On good days, the pain is manageable. I am able to sit at my computer, go to the gym, and even pick up my daughters with only mild discomfort. When my symptoms become slightly aggravated, sleep is elusive. I am sometimes able to manage a few hours of rest each night by carefully situating myself in “Daddy’s bed”—the name my daughter has given to the chair into which I collapse after succumbing to prescribed narcotics.
On bad days, though, the pain is unendurable. Imagine a bad muscle cramp mixed with the “pins-and-needles” sensation of an arm that has lost circulation. Then, imagine being hit on the face from the inside out. When this happens, I can neither lie down nor sit down without exacerbating the problem, so on bad nights I simply pace the hallways of my house, waiting for dawn.

I am only 37 years of age, but I feel old. In spite of numerous sympathizers who brave their fair share of sleepless nights, I also feel alone, not to mention completely broken. Not too long ago, I experienced a particularly bad flare-up that lasted for months. I was exhausted with everything: tired of hurting, of sleepless nights, of being a burden to my wife and children. Most of all, I was tired of the world that God had made—a capricious world with a reality defined by pain. I felt I could no longer endure. I resonated with Dostoyevsky’s words in The Brothers Karamazov:

“...and we were all filled with a sense of an arm that has lost circulation. Then, imagine a bad muscle cramp mixed with the “pins-and-needles” sensation of an arm that has lost circulation. Then, imagine being hit on the face from the inside out. When this happens, I can neither lie down nor sit down without exacerbating the problem, so on bad nights I simply pace the hallways of my house, waiting for dawn.

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“It isn’t that I refuse to acknowledge God, but I am respectfully giving him back my ticket to a world like this.”

I find I have very few places where I am allowed the freedom to express this level of fear and doubt. Much like the uncertainty it produces, pain is “not normal” in the contemporary Western world. It is a sign of weakness. It is an aberration. The chronic nature of my pain also weighs down others—especially those who care for me most and urgently want to see me well. Consequently, my encounter with chronic pain, although hidden from view, is a struggle that shapes and reshapest my basic awareness of the world. But the truth—oh, that truth—that is as unexpected as it is daunting—is that pain does far more than simply press me into a realm of disbelief. Time and again, it ushers me into a world I never knew existed.

“No human life is without pain, not even the one lived by the human who was also God.”

The catastrophic presence of God.

Catastrophic. Rarely are we comfortable associating a word like this with the work of God, but it captures an important element of my story. I have been shattered more than once. But that is the convoluted beauty of it. Pain-filled hour, I have lost my faith and found it anew during times of normalcy—becomes a far more complex and untamed God—a God who not only chooses to work through pain, but a God who moves so god-awfully slow. And sweeps legitimate doubts under the carpet. We can controlled or co-opted. There is no room in this space for a God who cannot be contained or earth evaporate. In that most precious of spaces, our bodies are not alleviated of pain, but re-created in and through it. And, much like Jacob, what emerges from this context is not an easy kind of painlessness, but a hard-won hope—one that weaves our chronic pain into the redemptive story that God is writing for us all.

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Aron Moore’s books seem so out of place at the Victor Valley Transit Authority that his coworkers renamed his office “the library.” Books on philosophy and “the beauty of the infinite” lean next to transportation manuals, a collection of ancient Near Eastern pottery sits on the shelves above his computer, and a Bible lies open on the desk. Aaron enjoys the curiosity of his colleagues, since it often turns into an opportunity for conversation about subjects that give his work meaning. “When we get to questions of ultimate value,” he says, “I can often talk to them on a deeper level in ways they hadn’t thought about before.” What does theology and philosophy have to do with transit planning, they ask? Aaron looks around his office and answers—everything.

As a student at Fuller, Aaron [MAT ’11] had plans to be a professor. Obsessed with theology and philosophy, he spent most of his time in the library, preferring reading to friendships with his peers or professors. He soon realized, however, that Fuller wanted to make him “a whole person,” and that the community around him expected him to integrate his books with real relationships. “Academics is a valuable pursuit, but I started to see I was using it to prove my importance and self-worth,” he recalls, instead of being present with others.

Around that time, Aaron took a missiology class with Bill Dyrness, professor of theology and culture, that reoriented the way he understood vocation: “He taught me that ministry is about opening up opportunities for people to see God’s love rather than bringing anything to them,” he says. It was an important shift—rather than serving others out of his own strength, Aaron was learning he only had to be present, look for opportunities, and join in. After the class, he decided to balance his studying by volunteering at Fuller’s food bank, a weekly food distribution service for the local Pasadena community. It was a step toward “impactful, relational ministry” that would come to shift the momentum of his life.

Every week in the parking lot next to Carnell Hall, the hands that turned the pages of theology books also learned to sort vegetables and day-old bread. “Volunteering at the food bank pulled me out of just being a student of theology and into becoming a practitioner of my faith,” he remembers. “It was an important place where we could treat people with dignity even at their most vulnerable time.” As he befriended regulars at the food bank, it wasn’t long before he noticed a pattern as to why they sometimes didn’t show up. When people missed a week, they almost always had the same reason: they couldn’t afford the transportation to get there. Their absence troubled Aaron and became an epiphany: “Services don’t matter if you can’t get to them.” Helping people get access to services they needed could be its own form of ministry, he thought, and if people were falling through the gaps in a densely populated city like Pasadena, Aaron wondered about the area he came from in California’s high desert, where cities were sparse and the distance between them even wider.

He started researching transportation services and, when he graduated, found a job near his hometown. “I didn’t plan on this, but I saw a community in need and thought I could help,” he says. He started work as the director of consolidated services at the Victor Valley Transit Authority, serving people living in the small towns scattered over the high desert northeast of Los Angeles. With so much empty space, the arid landscape creates unique problems for people who can’t travel across it, and it became Aaron’s job to look for creative solutions. “We’ve all been at that point where we don’t have a functioning automobile, but some people are in that place without any friends or family, so they’re locked into isolation,” he says. “We’re trying to create options in rural communities where they otherwise couldn’t get to public transportation.”

Under Aaron’s direction, his team has donated cars to churches and nonprofits who then use the vehicles to connect people to health care, after-school programs for children, or even church services on Sunday. They have developed a driver reimbursement program that refunds costs to volunteers who drive others in the community to appointments and other services—a program with the added benefit of encouraging neighbors to meet one another. “We’re trying to get people engaged in their communities, and that’s one reason I love in transit
KATE SPENCE, photographer, is a graphic designer for FULLER magazine and other seminary communications. Find her work at katespencedesigns.com.

MICHAEL WRIGHT (MAT ’12), storyteller, is the associate editor for FULLER magazine and FULLER studio. Find him on Twitter @mjeffreywright.

the volunteer driver program,” he says. “It helps them get to know their neighbors, and after a while, people begin to become friends.” When one patient was late to a doctor’s appointment, he remembers, the volunteer driver went inside to advocate for him; transportation became a means for supporting a friend in need. For another, the transit service not only helped her make her appointments, it decreased debilitating anxiety so she could have a better quality of life at home. When Needles, California, lost a 99 Cent Store and Dollar General—the only source of inexpensive food for many—Aaron’s team developed a rideshare program so that families could carpool to nearby towns. Even though the costs were low, they discovered people couldn’t pay for the service, so they developed financial cards that worked not only as payment for ride-sharing but also as a solution to banking needs. “Seeing the community receive that added benefit was satisfying,” he says.

Running errands, shopping, and doctor visits are “basic things we take for granted, but they’re things people can’t do without transportation,” says Aaron. Without access to transportation, people find that struggles with seemingly unrelated social issues become exacerbated. The longer he’s worked in this field, the more Aaron has realized that transportation is at the center of many community challenges: poverty, mental health needs, isolation, health care access. “In ministry, of course you want to spread the gospel, but you also want to care for the physical needs,” he says, sharing a conviction that came from studying neuroscience and the soul with Warren Brown, professor of psychology, and Nancy Murphy, senior professor of Christian philosophy. “This world matters. Bodies and the needs of bodies in this world matter.”

As the programs have grown, Aaron has started presenting at council meetings and other nonprofits to share what he’s learned and to advocate working together to build a “web of services” for the community. Ultimately, the value of these transportation services is more than just lending vehicles or creating new programs. For Aaron, it’s about creating access to services that strengthen communities and help people live meaningful lives.

Few people set out to work in public transportation, he points out. “Most of my team started out doing something else, but we saw a community need,” he says. “I know I’m doing exactly what God has called me to do even though I never anticipated doing it.” Looking around at his books, he knows the transit office is precisely the place to bring theology and relationships together. “Reading Mark Labberton’s book Called was confirmation of my choice,” he remembers. “It was an affirmation that Jesus wants us to function and work in a practical manner to meet people’s needs and show them his love.”

Driving across the desert, praying with a coworker in the break room, reading Scripture in his office—they’re landscapes converging into a single mission field Aaron is grateful to traverse: “I see my work as an expansion of Christ’s body and the church. It may be an impossible vision, but I want to see a day when everyone can get to where they need to go.”

“I know I’m doing exactly what God has called me to do even though I never anticipated doing it.”
“I will make for you a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety.”

Hosea 2:18
우리가 꿈꾸는 샬롬

마크 래버튼 (Mark Labberton)

EL SHALOM
QUE TANTO ANHELAMOS
Por Mark Labberton

우리가 꿈꾸는 샬롬(shalom)에 대한 가장 넓은 의미는 “전부”(whol-ness)입니다. 그러나 이와 관련된 한문은 “합일”(통합)이라고 한다. 그러나 이런 진정한 통합은 구체적이고 실질적인 것이 될 수 있습니다. 이 놀라는 한 문은 우리가 친구, 동료, 가족, 부모, 형매, 기업, 국가, 친목 관계, 정치, 성직자, 복음에 대한 과도한 그동안의 사랑과 소망이 될 수 있습니다. 그러나 이와 같은 사랑은 모든 관계의 충전으로 충전되어지며, 분명한 사랑이 우리의 모든 관계를 보다 완전하게 통합시킬 것입니다.

2013년 가을에 펼쳐진 학교의 70년의 번화함에 이렇게, 삶은 복음적 과거의 변화와 혼란을 야기시킨 다. 오늘날 기적, 세계, 희생,oblin, 기적, 세월, 혼란, 기적, 부모, 형매, 기업, 국가, 친목 관계, 정치, 성직자, 복음에 대한 과도한 그동안의 사랑과 소망이 될 수 있습니다. 그러나 이와 같은 사랑은 모든 관계의 충전으로 충전되어지며, 분명한 사랑이 우리의 모든 관계를 보다 완전하게 통합시킬 것입니다.

어느 그림조의 제목은 바로 이 같은 세상을 표현한 것입니다. 여기에 잔잔한 금빛의 어둠과 고요, 그리고 연꽃의 몹에 반도 필요한 복음적 성품에 관한 성능적 탁월을 제시합니다. 복음적 성품에는 분명한 절제와 더불어 특별한 참여의 모습을 보여주십시오. 이와 연계된 예수의 자비로운 성격은 우리를 비롯한 모든 사람들에게 희생적 사랑의 만명을 제시합니다. 이와 관련해 예수의 유래적 영적 전통을 고찰하는 것은 복음적 신앙의 중요성에 대한 희생적 사랑에 대한 탁월한 이론적 신학적 전통을 고찰하는 것은 복음적 신앙의 중요성을 제시하는 것입니다.

우리가 품어야 하는 삶은 복음적 성명과 생명의 동력을 제공합니다. 도전적 기상, 새로운 그리고 성공의 경험이 피어난다는 것을 우리는 이해하고, 어디선가의 고통, 심정천지의 고통, 그리고 희생의 턴을 통해 진정한 생명을 발견할 것입니다. 그래서 우리는 복음적 성명과 생명의 동력을 통해 진정한 생명을 발견할 것입니다.
Leslie C. Allen

A s an Old Testament professor, I find it gratifying that a Hebrew word has passed into Christian currency. In Palestine, it was a religiously meaningful word, especially among the Pharisees. It is used in the New Testament as well, where it is often translated as “peace.” It is regularly used in the context of Christ’s “peace be with you” and “peace I give you.” It is also used in the context of Christ’s “peace” in John 14:27, where he promises to his disciples, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.”

The Hebrew word for “peace” is shalom, which is a Hebrew verb that can be translated as “to be at rest,” “to be whole,” “to be complete,” or “to be satisfied.” It is a word that is used in a variety of contexts, including peace, health, justice, and wholeness. It is a word that is central to the Jewish and Christian traditions.

The Greek word for “peace” is eirinē, which is also derived from the Hebrew word shalom. It is a word that is used in a variety of contexts, including peace, health, justice, and wholeness. It is a word that is central to the Jewish and Christian traditions.

The word shalom is not just a word for peace, but it is a word for wholeness, completeness, and well-being. It is a word that is used to describe a state of being whole and complete. It is a word that is used to describe a state of being healthy and well.

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ENDNOTES
1. Unattributed translations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.
2. NP quotations are taken from the 2011 edition.
I was born in Medellin, Colombia, and at the age of 16, left with a broken heart. My heart continues to break over the plight of my home country—Colombia’s long and complicated armed conflict between guerrillas, paramilitaries, and government security forces has inflicted undeniable pain and left far-reaching scars. Last year, however, I returned to my beautiful and conflict-ridden country in pursuit of reconciliation and peacemaking. Accompanied by colleagues and armed with tools, I went with a mission to partner with the local church in learning how to bring shalom to those suffering from the aftermath of the 53-year-long conflict.

Colombia’s protracted internal armed conflict has displaced nearly 7.2 million people. It now ranks as the country with the largest number of internally displaced peoples (IDPs) in the world, surpassing even Syria’s IDP numbers.1 As in most armed conflicts, often the most vulnerable bear the cost. Children and their mothers make up the majority of those forcibly displaced by war in Colombia and number in the hundreds of thousands. Ethnic minorities—including indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups, especially those in the countryside—have disproportionately suffered the devastating consequences of this bloody, cruel, and protracted conflict.

I find that many don’t know much about the devastating effects of internal displacement, or even what internal displacement is. An internally displaced person is anyone who has left their residence because of danger, violence, or conflict, but has not crossed their own country’s borders. This means they are not technically refugees or immigrants: their plight is often invisible to others within and outside their home country.

Brutal violence, terror, and forceful removal from one’s land and property have thrust thousands of Colombians out of their hometowns and farms. The land they occupy is inextricably linked to the lives and livelihoods of many Colombians. Yet their land and its raw materials are too often seized for profit or political gain, with its inhabitants seen asnameless obstacles. Uprooted and seeking refuge, IDPs often go to the cities and end up on the margins of urban settings where they meet with other forms of violence and exclusion. IDPs are usually cut off from their regular jobs, healthcare and sanitation systems, schools, security, and social and support. As a result, IDPs are among the most vulnerable populations, often remaining in danger long after their displacement, with the continued and deepening absence of opportunity for a dignified life.

Although limited peace agreements were signed in November 2016, many Colombians and international humanitarian agencies argue that Colombia has not entered a post-conflict era yet. The country continues to struggle to bring dignity and reintegration to its vast numbers of IDPs. Even in zones where the armed conflict has ended, the majority of internally displaced persons are unable to return home because of devastated local economies. Many have lost their homes and land and have no one to go back to. Others lack resources to return or are reluctant to do so because they have no confidence in the peace and security conditions. Many have endured displacement for years or even decades.

THE CHURCH AND SHALOM IN A TIME OF CONFLICT

Shalom is one of the most outstanding and relevant biblical-theological concepts for human life. It goes beyond harmony, well-being, and prosperity to encompass a fundamental relationship with the Creator, oneself, society, and nature. This biblical peace must not be confused with the more trivialized and elusive type of “peace” that many associate it with. On the contrary, shalom includes the intentional development, repair, and reconciliation of relationships with God and our fellow human beings (Matt 5:9; John 14:27; 18:33). Further, the biblical concept of shalom calls for a healthy relationship with the land and its resources, a relationship that is deeply broken for so many Colombian IDPs. Not only is the church commissioned to live out and experience shalom but also to share and impart it. “The children of God” must always and in every place be “peace-makers” (Matt 5:9).

In Colombia’s current historical moment, the church must act boldly and wisely. Substantial evidence documents the vital role played by faith leaders in facilitating the emotional recovery and integration of IDPs. The 48 million inhabitants of Colombia are predominantly Christian: 79 percent Catholic, 13 percent Protestant, 2 percent other, and 6 percent with no religious affiliation.2 These statistics alone highlight the important position the church and faith leaders can have in promoting the health and well-being of IDPs. Throughout history, the Colombian church has had an unquestionable convening power. As a Colombian woman and Christian social scientist, I urge and seek to help Colombian faith communities to address gender-based violence and trauma of IDPs among their people.

The church must address gender-based violence head on from its pulpit and in its daily proclamation of the kingdom of God. Even in the face of historically rooted, gendered trauma, the church can offer a voice that challenges cultural narratives and seeks social justice. Our ecclesiology must use a gender-sensitive approach to break down harmful stereotypes and misinformation harmful to women created over generations. Responding to our God-given imperative to bring shalom, I believe churches are called to provide a range of interventions to IDPs—from offering basic physical necessities to caring for spiritual
Faith communities have not always been within their congregations. It is a daunting task, yet our efforts must address the overall vulnerability and needs of the IDP. Churches must themselves be welcoming places where trauma survivors find life-giving relationships by enfolding them. The church is a community based on our theological position—that the ongoing abuse, yet many people still seek support from pastors before seeking help from a psychologist or mental health professional. How is the church of Christ to respond to the suffering of displacement as in most parts of the world, there is a moral imperative to bring shalom to IDPs. The Colombian IDPs. Complex multidimensional social problems require multidisciplinary solutions. Peace-making efforts in Colombia must be insubordinately woven into multilayered national and global efforts that are laced with patience, endurance, creativity, love, and deep belief in God’s ultimate plan for redemption and reconciliation. Bearing in mind the complexity and gravity of the internal displacement problem in Colombia, a seminary in Medellín, Fundación Universitaria Seminario Bíblico de Colombia (FUSBC), one of the largest in Latin America, has been intentionally engaging theologians and faith leaders in formulating an appropriate church response. Supported by a generous grant from the Templeton World Charity Foundation, many professors are engaged in a large research project entitled “Integral Missiology and the Human Flourishing of Internally Displaced Persons in Colombia.” This research project has been designed from a participatory action research perspective that seeks to empower IDPs and promote self-reliance by engaging them as planners, implementers, and beneficiaries. I celebrate this approach: as an inquisitive and observant teenager, I remember being very put out by the fact that my denomination was mostly managed by foreigners. I would rant about how our theology and even our modes of worship were colonized. Going back to Colombia today, I fear that I would end up doing the same—forcing what I assume to be brilliant solutions onto someone else’s problems. I have been humbled by the efforts of the Colombian church and Colombian theologians to
remain true to our roots, to pay attention to our unique cultural history and underpinnings, and to engage both local and international help. It has been inspirational and transforming to partner with internally displaced persons and with Colombian theologians, sociologists, economists, lawyers, psychologists, and educators—all armed with their unique expertise and views, all coming together to bring forth their best God-given gifts to bear witness and to bring about shalom in a time of conflict.

God moves in mysterious ways. Large movements of people also bring opportunities for healing and reconciliation. As I work with FUSBC and Fuller, I bear witness to the many willing Christian servants who move beyond borders, using their Christian consciousness, theology, and the knowledge of their disciplines, to push these peace conversations into different spaces in the Protestant church in Colombia. We are attempting to learn from and support pastors and faith leaders working with IDPs and to amplify the voices of IDPs who seek justice in their own individual cases, but also, more broadly, for all who are seeking shalom. I saw my diverse and brave clinical psychology doctoral students—Josi Hwang Koo, Byron Rivera, Miko Mechure, Stephanie Banuelos, Marissa Nunes—and my American, South African, and Colombian colleagues wrestle with the horrors of armed conflict in their attempts to create spaces where the church can bear witness to the suffering of IDPs. I chuckled yet was deeply moved when my Fuller colleague, Dr. Tommy Givens, observed that he had never participated in a research project that required so much crying. These brave Fuller students and colleagues—Colombian and foreign alike—and their attempts to learn, support, and accompany the Colombian Protestant church in peacemaking efforts among IDPs have given me a glimpse into the depth and magnitude of the meaning of shalom.

Going back to Medellín—to the seminary where my father taught for several years and to the playgrounds where I formed unforgettable memories of community, good friends, laughing, and eating mangos—all felt surreal. Multiple times I had to stop to take it all in. I was overwhelmed to see God’s integral and transcendential peace—shalom—at its best in my own life. Here I was, the Colombian in diaspora in the United States, returning to my country of origin, making peace with my past, having the privilege to contribute my grain of salt and little sparkle of light to the peacemaking process, blessed to be part of God’s grand master plan to bring shalom to humanity. Indeed, no borders limit God—and his peace transcends all understanding.

ENDNOTES


3. Internal Displacement Division of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). See also the websites of the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (www.refugees.org), Refugees International (www.refintl.org), and www.reliefweb.int.

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” —Jeremiah 29:7
EMBODIED SHALOM: MAKING PEACE IN A DIVIDED WORLD

Jer Swigart

I n my role as a peace-making journey, I sat with a mentor on a porch overlooking the Rocky Mountains. We were in the midst of a conversation about shalom. Playing devil’s advocate, he pushed on my every thought about peace: what it required, what it looked like, whether it was the same as justice or something far more. Recognizing that my young mentee was in a necessary moment of disillusionment, my mentor smiled, sat back, gazing toward the meadows and aspen groves and to the mountains looming in the distance. With a seasoned sarcasm, he said, “This is peace, is it not?”

On the one hand, I couldn’t help but agree. My experience in that moment matched what I had learned about peace as a young, white, evangelical faith leader. I was in a beautiful place, relaxed, on a spiritual retreat, and among good friends. There was no conflict that I could see, hear, or read about. All seemed “right” in the world—or at least on the porch of that particular cabin.

But on the other hand, I knew that peace meant something far more than the general experience of tranquil stability or absence of conflict. I knew that the very moment of “peace” we were experiencing in the mountains was likely, at the same time, a moment of terror for countless friends around the country and world.

I knew this because I arrived at the moutains having just left encounters with pain. A month prior, I had been in the epicenter of the very complex Israeli-Palestinian conflict where I had experienced, firsthand, the trauma of this decades-old struggle. Just a week before, I had been in the borderlands between San Diego and Tijuana where I had encountered the trauma of Central American migrants, Latinx deportees, Haitian asylum seekers, and Syrian refugees. Closer yet, I had just traveled to the mountain lodge from my home in San Francisco’s Bay East where the divide between the black and white communities was growing dangerously wide and where conflict between my neighbors was destabilizing the neighborhood.

While I was at ease on that porch, my life and work had me in the thick of conflict in my own neighborhood, within my country, and throughout the world. My experiences had convinced me that the peace God waged in Jesus resulted in something far bigger than a sense of calm and stability for the privileged. But to define it? I was stumped. After listening to my silence, my mentor offered this counsel:

Everyone defines peace differently. The vision for peace that you have is holistic and has the potential to inspire people of faith to embody it in ways that will change the world. But your definition needs to flow from the Scriptures. Start with the cross and then work to define what it is that you’re hoping to bring to life in the midst of our divided world.

Identifying the cross as the starting point of theological exploration was something I had never been encouraged to consider. As I had only ever encountered the story of God from a chronological perspective, I had come to understand the cross as the continuation of the violent, warrior God motif of the Hebrew Scriptures. My Christian upbringing had led me to understand the cross not as a place of peace but as a tool of torture, wielded by a wrath-filled God, and focused exclusively on my sin.

Imagine, therefore, the moment when my odyssey took me through the Gospels to Colossians 1:18–19 and face-to-face with a cross that declares the extravagance of God’s restorative wingspan. It was there I realized that not only did the cross redeem the human soul, but it also heals broken identities, reunites creation, mends divided relationships, renovates and replaces unjust systems, and repairs international conflicts. Peace, then, as defined by the cross, is the restoration of all things. It is the holistic repair of severed relationships, the mending of the jagged divides that keep us from relationship with one another. According to Colossians 1, the implications of the cross were comprehensive and conclusive: God had waged a decisive peace in Jesus, and it had worked. That meant that God is the Great Peacemaker and restoration is the mission of God.

Accompanying the emergence of shalom’s elusive definition was a more expansive understanding of who God is, whom God is for, and what God accomplished in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. I had discovered a God who sees the humanity, dignity, and divine image in every human being. Here is a God who sees our pain and our plight and, instead of remaining distant or walking away, chooses to immerse himself into the radical center of it. Here is a God who, from within the complexities of our conflicts, con-

The above is excerpted from an article available in its entirety online.

This shalom is possible only because God waged peace in Jesus and it worked. Joining the Spirit in making that peace real in our world is the adventure to which we’ve all been called.

Jer Swigart (MDiv ’11) is a church planter, community organizer, professor, and cofounder of a Tableau training initiative called The Global Immersion Project, which forms, equips, and mobilizes individuals and communities to help bring healing to areas of conflict. His engagement within national and international conflicts has equipped him to guide those in the North American church who seek to become instruments of peace in the world. He’s a consultant, speaker, and coauthor of Mentoring the Divides: Creative Love in a Conflicted World (InterVarsity Press, 2017).

50  FULLER MAGAZINE  |  FULLER.EDU/STUDIO

51  2017  |  ISSUE #9 SHALOM
CURRENT PEACEBUILDING PRACTICES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In our current world, it is usually assumed that those held in a position of power have the responsibility to call conflicting parties to the negotiation table. Peace brokers, such as the United Nations, European countries, Russia, or some other “strong nation,” will engage in diplomatic gymnastics to prepare conflicting parties for negotiations through the “Track I” approach—via professional diplomats or governmental authorities. Each of the parties in the conflict, in the meantime, makes every effort to gain a stronger hand, usually by taking greater hold of what they know their enemy wants (whether land, control, influence, demands, arms, or power), so that they would have a stronger position at the negotiation table. This approach, however, usually leads either to a temporary truce or to no deal at all. It is often a sinister power dance between parties mostly driven by self-interest and ambition. No permanent peace has been brokered in the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations through such Track I diplomacy. from Camp David (1978) to Madrid (1991) to Oslo (1993), or any of other countless attempts. Similarly, little advance has been made in the Syrian conflict beyond temporary cease-fires, across a series of Geneva and Astana talks, from 2012 to the present.

In the case of Lebanon, the Taif Accord of 1989 is the Track I achievement seen as the most promising for now in resolving the numerous intractable conflicts currently in existence that are imbued with religion and sectarianism.

If the “way of the world” in building peace has been failing us, and if there is increasing recognition that religion renders conflict intractable, then it is perhaps time for the church to reexamine its legacy in the realm of conflict as well as its biblical mandate for peacemaking. We must ask ourselves, as people of God, whether we have been part of the problem or part of the solution, and how we will tackle the way ahead.

A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF SHALOM AND METAPHORS OF PEACEBUILDING

In a recent blog on biblical peace, I examined the concept of shalom in the Old Testament as the semantic framework for our understanding of the New Testament teaching on peace. I discovered that God’s peace is a state of well-being into which God invites his people in fulfillment of his part of the covenant with them. The Israelite people are promised God’s shalom on condition that they remain faithful to him, keep the Sabbath, and obey his commandments (Lev 26:1–5). Under those conditions, they are promised that “the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit,” that he will “grant peace in the land,” that they will have victory over their enemies, and that he will increase their numbers and keep his covenant with them. And crucially from an Old Testament perspective, God promises, “I will put my dwelling place among you . . . I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people” (Lev 26:1–2). When Jesus was asked which commandment was the greatest, he affirmed, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,” adding that the second is “like it. ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matt 22:37–39). Clearly, Jesus agreed that our faithfulness to God is at the heart of the covenant and the core condition of our experience of God’s shalom. But he established as well the second commandment at the same level of importance. We cannot affirm that we truly love God if we don’t also love our neighbor. The Apostle John warns in his first epistle: “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love his brother and sister is liable to be a liar for whoever does not love his brother and sister, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20). In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus refers to peacemakers as the “children of God” (Matt 5:9). It is hard to think of any higher status than this in our understanding of the
All of these metaphors convey the possibility of transforming the entire dough. The common thread is always that a little of it transforms the entire dough. Jesus warned about the “yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (Matt 16:6) and that of Herod (Mark 8:13), and later his disciples understood that he was referring to their teaching (Matt 16:12). In Luke’s Gospel, the yeast of the Pharisees is used as a reference to their hypocrisy (Luke 12:43). Paul uses the yeast metaphor in similar ways, warning the Corinthians that their boasting is like yeast that will corrupt the whole dough (1 Cor 5:6), and the Galatians that the false teaching to which they are falling prey, like yeast, “works through us all; it is useless. A third lesson—again from the light metaphor (Matt 5:14–16). If a lamp is lit and then hidden under a bowl, it is useless. A third lesson—from the light metaphor—is that we can sometimes try so hard to be light that we leave people blinded in our paths. If we become saturated with the teaching and spirit of Jesus, however, then our “good deeds” will reflect the light of Jesus in the world, rather than our own, and people will glorify our Father in heaven (v. 16).

Jesus’ calling of us to be “the salt of the earth” (Matt 5:13) contains at least two implications for the church in a position of numerical minority. The first is that it is often when we are small in number that we can be most effective in bringing meaning to a meaningless world. As I have argued elsewhere in an exploration of the sociopolitical process of “minoritization,” the majority/minority dynamic is not merely a question of numbers. Numerically large communities can behave with a majority mindset, just as numerically small communities can behave with a majority mindset. Furthermore, I would argue that Jesus calls us, even when we become a numerical majority, to continue to walk humbly as though we were a numerically minor community. An overbearing church in contemporary society, when it seeks to dictate morality, behavior, and even global politics, is as unpleasing to society as too much salt in food. The second lesson from being salt, and effectively the reverse of this same coin, is that if we blend into society to the point where we provide no prophetic challenge and no alternative vision for our world, we lose our raison d’étre—and it would be just as well for us to be thrown out as trash! The second lesson is reaffirmed in Jesus’ use of the “light” metaphor (Matt 5:14–16). If a lamp is lit and then hidden under a bowl, it is useless. A third lesson—from the light metaphor—is that we can sometimes try so hard to be light that we leave people blinded in our paths. If we become saturated with the teaching and spirit of Jesus, however, then our “good deeds” will reflect the light of Jesus in the world, rather than our own, and people will glorify our Father in heaven (v. 16). Our third metaphor, of yeast, is used both positively and negatively in the New Testament. The common thread is always that a little of it transforms the entire dough. Jesus warned about the “yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (Matt 16:6) and that of Herod (Mark 8:13), and later his disciples understood that he was referring to their teaching (Matt 16:12). In Luke’s Gospel, the yeast of the Pharisees is used as a reference to their hypocrisy (Luke 12:43). Paul uses the yeast metaphor in similar ways, warning the Corinthians that their boasting is like yeast that will corrupt the whole dough (1 Cor 5:6), and the Galatians that the false teaching to which they are falling prey, like yeast, “works through us all; it is useless. A third lesson—again from the light metaphor (Matt 5:14–16). If a lamp is lit and then hidden under a bowl, it is useless. A third lesson—from the light metaphor—is that we can sometimes try so hard to be light that we leave people blinded in our paths. If we become saturated with the teaching and spirit of Jesus, however, then our “good deeds” will reflect the light of Jesus in the world, rather than our own, and people will glorify our Father in heaven (v. 16).

GLEANING INSIGHT ON PEACEBUILDING FROM THE CAIN AND ABEL NARRATIVE

Working toward peace in multifaction contexts has its particular challenges. Aren’t people often supposed to affirm the propositional truths of their religion with confidence, to the exclusion of other contenders? How do we build peaceful relationships with people who—we are convinced—are in the wrong? Furthermore, how do we do this when we perceive them as being violent? If you are an Arab Christian, do you respond when you have been ostracized through the centuries as a religious minority, even actively excluded and persecuted by the Muslim majority? I have found the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4 to contain invincible lessons for Christians living in multifaction contexts under duress. Verses 5–7 represent the pinnacle of the narrative.

So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?” But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it (Gen 4:5–7).

In this primordial encounter between Genesis’ third human person and God lies the embryonic presentation of human history’s most recurring and ever-present problem: religion at the heart of conflict. Cain has failed to please God through his religious ritual that would place Cain under a curse and turn him into “a restless wanderer from one country to another” (v. 11). Abel, on the other hand, has satisfied God, and God affirms “I will accept your offering too” (v. 4). God gives Abel his own ritual, which is passionately argued in the narrative. What we learn from God’s address to Cain in verses 6 and 7, first of all, is that God had not abandoned him as a result of his ritualistic failure. He is still there, close to him. He questions him, beginning with a description of his state: “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?” (v. 6). God addresses Cain in this way as a sort of consolation. His botted sacrifice has neither cast him away from God’s face, nor does it necessitate anger and shame on his part. Cain is simply invited to correct his path: “If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?” (v. 7). Yet God’s consolation and correction comes with a warning. Given to anger and shame, Cain is exposing himself to a terrible fate. His anger and shame are referred to as a description fit for a wild and dangerous animal, lying in wait for its prey. As we reach verses 11–12, we learn that it was not inadequate religious ritual that would place Cain under a curse and turn him into “a restless wanderer from one country to another” (v. 11), but rather it is the fact that he had given in to his anger and shame, leading him to the murder of his brother Abel.

This brings us to the reality of our multifactional world. The pursuit of truth is certainly important. Theologians and philosophers of religion should and will continue to explore truth. People of faith will continue to invite others into the good news of the message of which they are convinced, presenting as best they can the coherence of their faith system. But besides this noble task of affirming “re- theology,” which is passionately argued in the affirmation of Abel’s offering and the rejection of Cain’s, the more important challenge

What we learn from God’s address to Cain in verses 6 and 7, first of all, is that God had not abandoned him as a result of his ritualistic failure. He is still there, close to him. He questions him, beginning with a description of his state: “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?” (v. 6). God addresses Cain in this way as a sort of consolation. His botted sacrifice has neither cast him away from God’s face, nor does it necessitate anger and shame on his part. Cain is simply invited to correct his path: “If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?” (v. 7). Yet God’s consolation and correction comes with a warning. Given to anger and shame, Cain is exposing himself to a terrible fate. His anger and shame are referred to as a description fit for a wild and dangerous animal, lying in wait for its prey. As we reach verses 11–12, we learn that it was not inadequate religious ritual that would place Cain under a curse and turn him into “a restless wanderer from one country to another” (v. 11), but rather it is the fact that he had given in to his anger and shame, leading him to the murder of his brother Abel.

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In Henry Nouwen’s classic work The Wounded Healer, he identifies the virtue of hospitality as the most suitable metaphor of ministry in our wounded world. He notes, “making anxious disciples into interested recipients of new ideas and insights.”1

Through the Institute of Middle East Studies at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary, we have been working to cultivate hospitality for the past 14 years in the area of interfaith dialogue. Muslims, who were largely absent from the life of the seminary since its inception in 1960, have attended as guest lecturers, as occasional lecturers, and as conference speakers. They have also become our regular hosts, offering us hospitality when we take students to attend mosque prayer and hold conversations with imams as part of their study of Islam.

Two years ago, we began taking further steps by launching a pilot project in peacemaking among Christian, Muslim, and Druze young people, called khebz w meleh. The name of the initiative means “bread and salt,” a symbol of sharing a meal in the Arab world. It carries strong connotations of hospitality and implies that when a meal has been shared, it becomes much harder to separate us or to sow enmity between us. Small groups of a dozen young people from different faith traditions come together in various regions of Lebanon and are invited to speak to each other about their faith, following a set of guidelines that encourage good listening and dialogue.2 Khebz w meleh offers a unique opportunity to young people, both Christian and Muslim, to witness clearly to each other about their faith and its power and relevance in their everyday life.

This year, we are launching a set of multitrack initiatives for building peace at the heart of churches and mosques. Through a growing network of faith leaders who have become friends, faith communities will be invited into each other’s spaces of worship to ponder together their feelings, attitudes, and conflicting narratives. They will seek ways, together, to develop a greater sense of a “common good” in the complex setting of Lebanon. In parallel, we are seeking to bring our own evangelical constituency to a place of healing through the exploration of our own woundedness vis-à-vis our Muslim neighbors. The ultimate goal of our multitrack peacemaking initiatives is that our various communities of faith will be able, together in a second phase, to become reconcilers in our societies. Until we do that, we will remain too blinded by our own narratives. We need to begin with a confession of our own inadequacies if we are to become reconcilers in our societies. Until we do that, we will remain too blinded by our sense of rage, fed by our own version of the narrative of Christian-Muslim history.

The church globally needs restoration and healing when it comes to its relationship with Muslims. We need to begin with a confession of our own inadequacies if we are to become reconcilers in our societies. Until we do that, we will remain too blinded by our sense of rage, fed by our own version of the narrative of Christian-Muslim history.

I am convinced from my work in the formation of leaders for the church in the MENA region that the greatest threat to the future of Arab Christianity is not Islam, but rather the perception that Christians have towards Muslims and of their Muslim neighbors. I worry that the kind of disheartening representations of Islam and Muslims that are common today, not just in the MENA church but in the church globally, are becoming so toxic and hazardous that they are having a long-term negative impact on the ongoing health of the church. And I worry that our self-perception as victims with neutralize our ability to break the cycle of violence and prevent our wounds from becoming a source of healing rather than of a festering stench.

Kerygmatic peacemaking is rooted in our self-giving God who, in Christ, not only revealed his willingness to become vulnerable but also to cultivate an eternal garden to bring the fullness of God’s grace to the world itself through a selfless life that led him to his death. The cross needs to become again a central symbol for the church’s kerygmatic peacemaking, not one that carries connotations of crucifixion, but one that was the sign that carries the wounds of self-giving.

When the church truly learns how to usher in God’s salam, the cross will become the garden, and the resurrection of Christ becomes the manifestation of a direly needed hope.

ENDNOTES
3. Institute for Multi Track Diplomacy, “What is Multi Track Diplomacy?” at http://imdt.org/about/what-is-multi-track-
        diplomacy/
6. Institute for Multi Track Diplomacy, “What is Multi Track Diplomacy?” at http://imdt.org/about/what-is-multi-track-
        diplomacy/
“He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples: they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” —Isaiah 2:4
SHALOM JUSTICE
Clifton R. Clarke

Shalom

Arito in a crowded airport waiting for a delayed plane. I tuned in to a heated debate raging on the television just above my head. I heard someone say, “Violence is a natural reaction for people who are brutalized. We must not focus on the reaction but on the cause of the reaction.” As I gathered my attention, I realized that the response came from a black activist who was asked to condemn the violent clashes that followed the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson. The rebuttal from the TV host, who seemed energized by the raw emotion of his guest, was swift: “I hear that, but why can’t they protest peacefully?” More conversation followed, but the guest’s initial comment stuck with me throughout the course of my journey.

Speaking just weeks before his assassination, which catalyzed rioting across America, Martin Luther King Jr. observed that he who delights in the welfare of his neighbor is the heir of life, and that he who delights in the welfare of his enemy is the heir of death. A riot is the language of the unheard. It is not enough for me to stand before you tonight and condemn riots. It would be to offer the exercise of justice and expressed indignation at the sight of oppression (Amos 5:21–24, Jer 22:1–17), which accounted for the absence of shalom in the present and possibly the future. For the prophets at least, shalom-making is working for justice and righteousness, which is at its core a quest for health-giving relationships between people and nations.6

The third and final major use of shalom is the moral or ethical one. Here there are two important moral distinctions. First, shalom is the opposite of deceit or speaking lies. To seek shalom is therefore to love truth and walk in integrity. Psalm 37:37 speaks of a “man [or woman] of shalom”—a

**The prophets knew clearly that God’s help and restoration of their nation was predicated upon justice being done in the land and oppression removed. Passages like Isaiah 9:5–7 and Jeremiah 23:5–6 distinctly mention the presence of justice/righteousness as a mark of hope for the future. The reason prophets like Amos and Jeremiah proclaimed such messages of doom in the face of looming captivity was because of the degree of social injustice among God’s people. They pleaded for the exercise of justice and expressed indignation at the sight of oppression (Amos 5:21–24, Jer 22:1–17), which accounted for the absence of shalom in the present and possibly the future. For the prophets at least, shalom-making is working for justice and righteousness, which is at its core a quest for health-giving relationships between people and nations.**

The shalom generally invoked is one of abundance, blessing, and freedom from danger, disease, war, and poverty. These are the natural correlates to shalom. Checking on someone’s physical shalom and that of their family is the first priority when meeting them, especially if you have not seen the person for a while. I experienced this during my time in West Africa. Whenever I would visit the homes of friends, they would first offer me a glass of water to ensure that my physical shalom from the journey was cared for, and then they would ask about the well-being of my wife, children, and extended family before getting to the purpose of my visit.

The second shade of meaning according to Yoder is one linked to social relationships. Shalom refers to the healthy relationship between nations, society, and family groups (1 Kgs 5:12; Judg 4:17; Josh 9:13; Gen 26:29, 31). Whereas shalom in this sense can be viewed as the opposite of war, as it is more commonly understood from the Greek eirene, it is so much more than that. Just as war marks the lack of shalom between nations, injustice is the measure of the absence of shalom within a society. In this regard, there is a close synergistic relationship between shalom and justice. In Isaiah 30:16–17, for example, shalom is clearly shown to be the fruit of righteousness/righ-

teousness/justice understood as the state or quality of being just.

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Then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field

And the effect of righteousness will be peace—shalom—and the result of righteousness, quietness and truth forever.

This passage asserts that shalom will be the reward of righteousness/justice. We see this pairing of righteousness and shalom also in Psalm 51:27, which is a cry to God for deliverance from adversaries who are oppressing the petitioner. At the end of the Psalm, we read:

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person of honesty and straightforwardness. Shalom’s second moral meaning is blamelessness or innocence: to be without guilt. In this realm, we can say that shalom-making is working to remove deceit and hypocrisy and to promote uprightness, integrity, and straightforwardness.

To summarize, shalom speaks to material and physical conditions, to the quality of our relationships, and to moral behavior. In short, shalom defines how things should be; it is the music that indicates we are living in harmony with God, our material world, and our relational world. To grasp how shalom relates to our situation today, it is important to keep those three aspects in mind. Walter Brueggemann captures the goal of shalom beautifully when he notes, “The central vision of world history in the Bible is that all of creation is one, every creature is one, every creature in community with others, living in harmony and security toward the joy and well-being of every other creature.”

**SHALOM, MORE THAN PEACE**

Our three aspects of shalom are linked critically to ethics, behavior, and practice; they are not merely abstract constructs. The kind of peace shalom represents, says Randy Woodley, is active and engaged, going beyond the mere absence of conflict. This takes us back to the conversation I heard at the airport, between the black activist and TV host about the clashes that resulted from the death of Michael Brown: “Why can’t they protest peacefully?”

Why were calls for peaceful protest in the face of brutality so readily dismissed by the activists? I would like to suggest two possible reasons. First, it seemed that peace, or shalom, meant to many a more-avoiding of physical violence at all costs. One ought to refrain from lethal force and oppose those who use such overt violence to challenge an existing oppressive social order. On the surface, such rhetoric appears incontestable, especially from a Judeo-Christian viewpoint. Yet it seems inconceivable to those who bear the crushing weight of the prevailing order that structures of oppression will ever be lifted off their shoulders without struggle and even violence. From their point of view, peace advocates are useless idealists far removed from the misery and existential structures of death that prevent human flourishing or shalom.

Second and more important, the binary characterization of peace as merely the opposite of violence, and as a value that condemns attempts to change the status quo by force, seems perverted to oppressed persons—whether on the streets of Ferguson or under any other oppressive regime across the world. They, after all, feel daily the violence of existing hostile conditions, and see the benefits of this violence accruing to the very people who preach nonviolence to them and urge the moral higher ground of “peace.” They experience the present economic and social order as oppressive and murderous—leaving many landless, homeless, hungry, unjustly incarcerated, and, above all, in deadly fear and voiceless about their destiny. By no means do I sanction violence as a justifiable response to these or other miscarriages of justice. I seek rather to draw attention to the fact that the violent reaction of the oppressed is merely a rejoinder to the perceived systemic violence to which they are subjected day after day. They ask, “Is it not those people who, while advocating nonviolence for us, benefit, at least indirectly, from the violence that victimizes us daily?”

**FALSE PROPHETS OF SHALOM**

Like the false prophets in the days of Jeremiah and the impending fall of Jerusalem, those modern-day false prophets and peace advocates rush to a shallow and skewed idea of peace, seeking to rearrange deck chairs and tables on a sinking ship. They neutralize those sounding the alarms, branding them as troublemakers and enemies of peace; they pacify the people with what Martin Luther King Jr. called in another context “the fierce urgency of now.” They declare peace and safety when sudden destruction is looming. Not that they are against justice or necessarily have evil intent, but their understanding of shalom is dangerously defective. It is flawed because the foundation upon which they seek shalom is also flawed and built on “fallow ground” (Jer 4:3).

For the true ancient prophets in Israel, justice was indispensable for shalom.
could never cover up things that were not okay. 4 This is the point behind Enkedi’s harsh critique of the false prophets who proclaimed shalom when there was no shalom, thereby lulling the people to sleep with a false sense of security—as he put it, whitewashing a wall that was about to collapse (Ezek 13:10, 11). Are those who make shapemaking the highest good of whitewashing in that they think we can have peace in spite of oppression, racism, exploitation, and injustice? Could this be what the black activist mentioned above was alluding to by making the comment, “Peace is a luxury we do not have”? 5

In the face of massive protest and rioting it is safer to focus on peacemaking and surface gestures of equality, yet these provide a smoke screen for the cancer of injustice that lies beneath the surface. It was the bait Dr. King refused to bite in his sermon, “Why America’s Negroes Can’t Be Satisfied,” delivered on November 13, 1963, saying, “We refuse to ignore this great problem. We refuse to be used as pawns in any game by those who profit by our dehumanization.” 6

Shalom, therefore, and against sin. In fact, we may safely describe evil as any apologizing of shalom, whether physically (e.g., by disease), morally, spiritual, or otherwise. 7 The work of shalom is therefore not merely the coming together of token representatives of the strong and the weak, grasping hands and singing “Kum ba yah”—but rather, to adjust Cornel West’s words, “Justice is what love looks like in public,” to say, “Justice is what shalom looks like in public.” 8 Riots and violence are by no means acceptable or effective means of pursuing shalom, but they are symptoms that “things are not as they should be.” 9 In the absence of shalom and in the face of oppression and injustice, the questions that dogged W. R. B. Dubois until the end of his life still perplex us today: Should we simply “walk humbly with our God,” a description of the heart’s attitude toward God? God’s people depend on him rather than their own abilities (Mic 2:3). With a heart of humility and an awareness that God is all-sufficient, we can look away from ourselves and tend to the physical, well-being and “okayness” of others. It is through humility that we can live a life of kenosis, in which the physical well-being of the poor, the weak, and the oppressed is at the center of our understanding of shalom.

Shalom is being well that exists in the very midst of threats—from sword and drought and wild animals. It is well-being of a material, physical, historical kind, not idyllic “pie in the sky,” but “salvation” in the midst of trees and crops and enemies—in the very places where people always have to cope with anxiety, to struggle for survival, and deal with temptation. 10

Shalom seen simply as “peace” is an anemic and convenient translation that serves the privileged class. Sometimes shalom will only come through the active creation of conflict. Where there is injustice, living out shalom dictates that the structures perpetuating the injustice be transformed. Where marginalization of the weak, the poor, the disempowered, and the “ethnic other” is present, living out shalom demands that we challenge the oppressive system and lift up those who are suffering from the bruising weight of oppression, because oppression is sin. 11

Brueggemann’s insight at this juncture is illuminating:

Shalom is the end of coercion. Shalom is the end of oppression. Shalom is the freedom to rejoice. Shalom is the courage to live an integrated life in a community of coherence. These are not simply neat values to be added on. They are a massive protest against the material and physical, social and relational, moral and ethical. Beginning with the moral and ethical, to “act justly” would have been understood by Micah’s audience as living with a sense of right and wrong. In particular, the judicial courts had a responsibility to provide equity and protect the innocent. Shalom justice requires that we challenge the corrupt and unjust laws and practices that oppress and discriminate on the basis of race and class.


In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech in 1964, Martin Luther King Jr. outlined the most perplexing evils of our time—and the solutions he presented were humanitarian, racial injustice, poverty, and war. It is in the context of these three evils that today’s search for shalom is most challenging. We ask ourselves, what does shalom look like when a young black teenaged youth is shot dead in the streets and his body is left sprawled on the cold concrete for hours? Or when a young white man sits quietly in a historic black church during a Bible study and then kills nine black parishioners? Do we speak about shalom when racism is a moral catastrophe, most graphically seen in for-profit prison complexes and targeted police surveillance of black and brown people? When arbitrary uses of the law—in the name of the “war” on drugs—have produced, in legal scholar Michelle Alexander’s apt phrase, a new Jim Crow of mass incarceration? 13 What should shalom look like when, in the richest nation in the world, one in five children is hungry? Or when the top one-tenth of one percent of Americans own almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent? When poverty is an economic catastrophe, inseparable from the power of greedy oligarchs and avaricious plutocrats indifferent to the misery of poor children, elderly citizens, and working people? What should shalom look like when military force is being used actively to maintain an unjust and oppressive status quo and to stifle those who would change the situation? When the doctrine of peace through strength is experienced by its victims as oppression through violence? It is only when we recognize these death myths that the questions posed by Dubois can be seriously pondered and the true meaning of shalom be wrestled with in our time.

Practicing Shalom

These are not simply neat values to be added on. They are a massive protest against the physical well-being and “okayness” of others. It is through humility that we can live a life of kenosis, in which the physical well-being of the poor, the weak, and the oppressed is at the center of our understanding of shalom.

Shalom justice will be based, not upon retribution or retaliation, but nonviolence. Lastly, related to the material and physical, the replaced “desperation set to work” to “work humbly,” a description of the heart’s attitude toward God. God’s people depend on him rather than their own abilities (Mic: 2:3). With a heart of humility and an awareness that God is all-sufficient, we can look away from ourselves and tend to the physical, well-being and “okayness” of others. It is through humility that we can live a life of kenosis, in which the physical well-being of the poor, the weak, and the oppressed is at the center of our understanding of shalom.

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The social and relational piece is related to “love mercy.” Here mercy is the Hebrew word ḥesed, which means “loyal love” or “loving-kindness.” Along with justice, Israel was to provide peace for all the nations. Deuteronomy 20:18-19 says, “Justice and mercy are foundational to God’s character” (Ps 89:14). God expected his people to show love to their fellow humans and to be loyal in their love toward him, just as he had been loyal to them (Mic: 2:8–9): “They will never again be driven outside; they will never again be desolate” (3:20–21, 6:12). It is on the basis of this love that shalom justice will be based, not upon retribution or retaliation, but nonviolence.

1. Taken from “The Other America,” a speech given by Dr. King at Groove Point High School on March 14, 1968.
4. Yoder, Shalom, 12.
5. Ibid., 15.
8. Yoder, Shalom, 15.
10. Woolley, Shalom, 22.
13. Cornel West’s popularized phrase states: “Justice is what love looks like in public.”
Sebastian C. H. Kim

SHALOM AS THE DUAL APPROACH OF PEACEMAKING AND JUSTICE-SEEKING: THE CASE OF SOUTH KOREA

Sebastian C. H. Kim

Shalom, usually translated “peace,” is a key theme in the Hebrew Bible. It refers to general well-being in all areas of life, especially physical health, as observed by Yeshua, the earthly manifestation of God. Shalom is peace (Deut 6:14). Biblical scholars point out that shalom has a “sacred significance far beyond the purely personal.” It also has social and political dimensions. Moreover, the “divine covenant of peace” includes righteousness, or justice (Isa 48:8, 8:10). As Christopher J. H. Wright explains, the kingdom of God—as expected by Israel and preached by Jesus—means both “true peace for the nations” and also “justice for the oppressed.”

In the New Testament, the kingdom of God is described as righteousness, peace, and joy (Rom 14:17). Christians have the mission to make this kingdom real. They must “restor[e] the [social] and political order by which the whole of politics is to be understood, not only as the existential state of being in peace and being “without war” (peacekeeping) but also in the transformative work of God’s rule, which is manifesting righteousness and just relationships with others, or peacemaking. For this reason, the relatively unknown biblical text “righteousness [justice] and peace will kiss each other” (Ps 85:10) is one of the most pertinent in the Old Testament when we try to understand and appropriately teach the teaching of shalom. There are ample discus- sions on righteousness (justice) and peace in isolation from each other, but the peacemakers particularly emphasize their integral relationship.

The connection between justice and peace is recognized by secular scholars. Johan Galtung, perhaps the most well-known peace activist in peace studies, presented models of conflict, violence, and peace. He defined “negative peace” as the cessation of direct violence and “positive” peace as dealing with structural and cultural violence as well. He saw that both approaches could be implemented simultaneously. Often temporary measures for keeping peace lead to a fragmented and fragile situation that will continue to perpetuate injustice, and peace without justice is often used by those in power to continue to exercise their oppression over victims of the conflict. Justice and peace must “kiss each other.” However, very often the situation demands sacrificing one dimension to the other. In the complexity of human society, there is no absolute justice—the concept of justice is fluid and relative. Justice for one group or individual may be injustice for the other party. Justice can be misused for secularism, criminalism, communalism, and partisanism, and so on. “Justice for all” is an ideal concept, which is realized by some individuals and groups who differ for whatever reason.

In this short article, I will discuss the relationship between peace and justice, drawing on insights from peace studies as well as biblical reflections. I will show how some Christian theologians in South Korea under the rule of military-backed governments addressed the tension between peacebuilding and jus- tice-seeking, and argue theologically for their integration as part of the mission of shalom.

JUSTICE AND PEACE WILL KISS EACH OTHER

We see that the concept of shalom contains a strong message about our engagement with society with a just attitude toward our fellow human beings (Amos 5:7; 8:12; Ps 35:11). In this sense, the meaning of shalom needs to be understood not only as the existential state of being in peace and being “without war” but is appropriate- ly called “the effect of righteousness” (Isa 52:17). It is the fruit of that right ordering of things with which the divine founder has invested human society and which must be actualized by man striving after an even more perfect reign of justice.

Shalom requires the dual approach of peace- making and justice-seeking.

WHICH COMES FIRST: PEACE OR JUSTICE?

Those who are working on peacebuilding and conflict resolution agree on the integral nature of the two components of justice and peace. However, there is always the question of priority: whether peace or justice is most important in the process of building trust and resolving conflict in a sustainable way. Scholars of peace studies are quite divided on the priority of justice or peace. In the case of protracted war, Todd D. Whitmore, in his discussion of this issue, questions what one sees as the priority of justice over peace in Catholic social teaching and argues that negative peace could be a precondition for justice. He points out that starting with justice is a problem since the various parties are all accountable, and it is almost impossi- ble to achieve positive peace until hostility is brought to a halt. So he concludes that, on the balance, the practical priority must be on the negative peace.

Conversely, Pauline H. Bakker insists on the importance of seeking justice in the peace, building process. She identifies the tension between peacebuilding, which involves con- fusion, conflict resolution, and justice-seeking, through establishing democracy and human rights. She regards those working for peacebuild- ing as “conflict managers” and those seeking justice as “democratizers.” However, she argues that “peace is no longer acceptable at any terms. It is intimately linked with the concept of peace, conflict resolution is not measured simply by the absence of bloodshed; it is assessed by the moral quality of the outcome.” She further emphasizes the importance of public accountability and basic human and political rights and criticizes the “conflict managers” as seeking short-term solutions, insisting that a solid democratic foundation provides a better chance of sustain- able security and peace.

The above discussions are focused on ap- proaches that balance justice and peace. One can say, however, in a conflict situation, justice without peace leads to a fragmented and fragile situation that will continue to perpetuate injustice, and peace without justice is often used by those in power to continue to exercise their oppression over victims of the conflict. Justice and peace must “kiss each other.” However, very often the situation demands sacrificing one dimension to the other. In the complexity of human society, there is no absolute justice—the concept of justice is fluid and relative. Justice for one group or individual may be injustice for the other party. Justice can be misused for secularism, criminalism, communalism, and partisanism, and so on. “Justice for all” is an ideal concept, which is realized by some individuals and groups who differ for whatever reason.

At the same time, peace can be misused for militarism and poverty, the status quo, and sta- bility, which are priorities for those in power. Often temporary measures for keeping peace are based on the status quo and mistaken a false sense of security, and there is little opportuni- ty to pursue justice, which poses a great risk to lasting peace. This was a tension that the people and the government of South Korea encountered during the middle of the 20th century.

JUSTICE AND PEACE IN SOUTH KOREA

During its period of military-backed govern- ments (1961–1988), South Korea faced various political and economic challenges: poverty and inequality in society, govern- mental human rights abuses, and confron- tation with communist North Korea. In this period South Korean churches were deeply divided theologically into conservative and liberal positions. One major topic of contention was the ways Christians grappling with the political situa- tion. Two key agendas of successive govern- ments were economic development as well as peace and stability in the Korean Penin- sula. In pursuing these goals, the government often legitimized its oppression of the opposi- tion party and disregarded the civil liber- ties of the people on the grounds of econom- ic growth and national security. The military movement was sparked in 1970 when some Christian leaders started to stand for, and, with the poor and exploited. As a secular scholar acknowledges, this “marked the beginning of South Korea’s working-class formation” and “awakened the intellectual community to the dark side of the export-ori- ented industrialization.” These Christian theologians captured many people’s imag- inations. They raised in the churches, and also in the wider society, issues of poverty and exploitation. They refused to accept the argument of the government and large compa- nies that the labor rights and conditions of ordinary workers and farmers could be sac- rificed with the justification that they would eventually reap the benefits of general eco- nomic development. They also rejected the government’s argument of limitation of human rights abuses on the basis of threats to national se- curity, and so they led movements for civil rights and democratization.

One of these theologians was Ahn Byung-ku, who, in a talk on “justice and peace,” criticized
people who believe that peace can be achieved without discussing justice. He insisted that the basis of peace could only come with the achievement of “true justice” in Korea—that is, when people were liberated from exploitation, with democratization and human rights restored. He argued that when we discuss peace, we have to talk about sharing of material wealth on the basis of our faith that everything is under God’s sovereignty and authority. As the early Christians shared their food with one another, so we should share what we have with others. He related God’s kingdom to the concept of a food-sharing community.

This concept of sharing food was highlighted in the poetry of Kim Chi-ha:

Rice is heaven
As you cannot possess heaven by yourself
Rice is to be shared by everybody
When rice goes in a mouth
Heaven is worshipped in the mind
Rice is heaven
Ah, ah, rice
To be shared by everybody.

Against protests by the opposition party, the military-backed government tried to persuade the people to support its rule on the basis of peace, security, and justice-seeking. The government argued that, in order to meet the challenging economic and political problems in the era of military-backed government, the association of Christianity with anti-communism was the key importance. As you cannot possess heaven by yourself, any civilians could be arrested and charged without going through proper trial processes. There were numerous cases of human rights violations as many were accused of associating with the North.

The majority of the South Korean church leadership tended to hold an anti-communist position due largely to the persecution of Christians in North Korea. Many of the Christian leaders in the South had fled from this. During large Christian gatherings throughout this period, the association of Christianity with anti-communism was very explicit, and this close identification is still strong among many older Christians. Members of this generation also regarded the advent of a capitalist market economy as a necessary measure, at least temporally, and they believed that, despite injustices, it would eventually lead to benefits for the poor. The economic growth of South Korea Protestant churches themselves adopted competitive approaches to gather congregations, which resulted in the rapid growth of megachurches in large cities. With hindsight, however, it seems that, in the debate over the emphasis on peace and security on the one hand and justice and human rights on the other, in the Korean case, people were too easily persuaded that peace, security, and well-being must take precedence. Movements for civil and human rights were eventually successful, overthrowing the military-backed government in 1987. Since then, South Koreans have enjoyed growing societal peace with a greater measure of justice; although the larger issues that protagonists also raised of peace and justice for the Korean Peninsula as a whole is as yet unresolved.

My argument drawn from this South Korean experience, as well as from biblical and sociopolitical sources, challenges the notion that peace must take priority over justice. This article supports the idea that the two seemingly opposed ideas should be applied in equal measure. If one is pushed to prioritize, one should choose justice rather than “neglect peace” in order to achieve lasting peace. Justice is not a value-free concept and differs from one group to another. In the Korean context, the twin aspects of justice-seeking and peacebuilding were vital in the struggle to meet the challenging economic and political problems in the era of military-backed governments.

INTEGRATING JUSTICE AND PEACE
This conclusion is also supported by political philosophers. Although there are shortcomings in his argument, John Rawls made an important contribution to integrating justice and peace in conflict situations. He challenged John Stuart Mill’s approach to the utilitarian concept of justice for the common good of the majority of the members of society. Rawls saw “justice as fairness,” which derived from the rational choice of individuals in a fair setting, resulting in a distributive principle that benefits the less advanced. His theory is based on two aims: maximizing the liberty of the individual (provided it does not impinge on others’ freedom) and providing disadvantaged people with the best opportunities possible.

I would like to go even further concerning the integration of justice and peace, pointing out that this question is also related to the ideological standpoint of any philosophy or theology. Does it support the status quo, or does it represent the interests of the minority, the poor, and the oppressed? Justice is not only fair treatment for all, but also active support of the weak, oppressed, and poor. That justice requires not only impartial treatment or equal opportunity is another conclusion of Rawls. Justice is not a value-free concept and differs from one group to another. In the Korean context, the twin aspects of justice-seeking and peacebuilding were vital in the struggle to meet the challenging economic and political problems in the era of military-backed governments.

ENDNOTES
PASSING THE PEACE: A PNEUMATOLOGY OF SHALOM

Patrick Odin

I n 1947, a new movement began that sought to be more attentive to the whole message of Scripture, not only in content but also in method. A group of people got together, said Fuller, and together built a seminary which they called neo-evangelicalism, and it needed a seminary so that pastors and leaders could be trained to teach the word, and live out this renewal in their context.1 They called this seminary Fuller Seminary, after Henry Fuller, father of the well-known radio-evangelist Charles E. Fuller. This was fortuitous, as the name “Fuller” also invited broad application. It was, after all, intended to be a fuller seminary than the fundamentalist Bible colleges the founders emerged from and a fuller seminary than the liberal institutions at which so many were trained.2 They wanted to offer a fuller engagement with the academy and with culture, all while deepening a fuller understanding of Scripture and a fuller commitment to evangelism, ministry, and missions. As Carl Henry put it, “The new evangelicalism embraces the full orthodoxy of fundamentalism in doctrine but manifests a social consciousness and responsibility which was strangely absent from fundamentalism.”3

As a renewal movement, evangelicalism has been widely successful in many metrics and, as its flagship seminary, Fuller has contributed over 40,000 ministers and to its cause. Like all renewal movements over time, however, evangelicalism faces being co-opted. While never really becoming the “establishment,” evangelicalism has increasingly become something even worse: it has become a demography. It competes for power and influence and money and cultural cachet among many other claimants. This status as a demography has led many to say evangalicalism has lost its way.

I’m not convinced that evangelicalism as a movement has lost its way, but I am convinced we are at a key crossroads and in need of a new vitality. Such a reorientation can’t be about establishing defensive boundaries or making strategies to take the fight to our demographic opponents. That is the way of Rome, of Empire. Instead, if we are to continue as a renewing movement, we need to return to our initial goals of putting our focus on Christ’s call for us and the Spirit’s power in us. This evangelical call includes an emphasis on peace. Fortunately, this peace is part of Christ’s promise for us in sending the Holy Spirit.

In John 14:16, Jesus sets the stage for his departure. His leaving is not loss but gain. It is good because it will inaugurate a transformative experience of the Spirit. It is good because it will initiate a transformative experience of life and hope. This life is one of love; the hope that there will be peace. As Jesus put it in 14:26, the promised Spirit will “teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.” In the next verse, he emphasizes the element of peace: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives, that your hearts should be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”

We cannot just stop at these verses and then pursue these themes with our own tactics and strategies, as if Jesus left us with a set of vague recipes, as if the gospel were a set of statements with which to agree. The gospel is not just a set of doctrines; it is a way of being, an orientation in life. These verses on the Spirit and peace are intentionally connected and part of the promise of Jesus to the people of God, the new promise of the arriving kingdom. The peacemaking Spirit passes the peace to us and we pass this peace to those around us. The gospel is an invitation to peace. We are to be peacemakers. This peace has three movements, each interconnected and mutually informing. First, we experience peace from God; next, we experience peace with our own selves; and then we can pass this peace to others. This is a peace that will finally enable full human participation in God.4 Having been invited, we invite, which is the orienting call for evangelism. This emphasis on evangelism was indeed a hallmark of the early decades of Fuller Seminary, with Fuller professors often spending significant time on their own or with students engaged in spreading the Good News in all sorts of places.5 Shalom does not stop with this, however. Peace with God leads into a new experience with the Spirit in our own lives, something even many Fuller faculty struggled with as they sought to do the Lord’s work in their own energy.6

PEACE WITH GOD

The term peace has often become limited to a narrow definition: peace as the absence of violence. Indeed, this is not surprising, since generally people originally used the words shalom and cresse this way. Peace was the rare interlude between the constancy of war. Scripture, however, invests more meaning in shalom, and this meaning extends into the New Testament. Peace, in a biblical sense, involves wholeness and completeness, an experience of well-being that comes in experiencing God’s presence and extends outward. As Nicholas Wolterstorff put it, “To dwell in shalom is to enjoy living before God, to enjoy living in one’s physical surroundings, to enjoy living with one’s fellow, to enjoy life with oneself.”7 Only peace with God allows for thorough peace in any other way.

Yet peace with God seems an impossibility because of brokenness and suffering on this side, and privilege and ego on the other. Some cannot find it and others do not want it. These distortions are a result of sin—and sin, as its core, opposes peace. Indeed, Cor- nelius Plantinga defines sin as “culpable dis- turbance of shalom.”8 It’s not supposed to be this way, of course. “God is for shalom,” as Plantinga puts it, “and therefore against sin.”

Patrick Odin, visiting professor of systematic theology and church history at Fuller Seminary, teaches theological and church history courses as well as integrated studies classes on worship and community. He is the author of It’s a Dancer. Moving with the Holy Spirit, New Long! A Trek through the Wilderness, and Theological Imagination: A Fuller Seminary Perspective. He has also written various articles and book chapters. He is currently editing a book for Fortress Press that addresses the possibilities of liberation for oppressors. Dr. Odin is an elder and occasional preacher at his neighborhood Wesleyan Church.

God is against sin, but for us, loving us and inviting us into a peace that comes through a justifying faith in Jesus Christ, an emphasis Paul makes in Romans 5. This is good news precisely because it offers rest and hope in a world that so often denies those possibilities. It is good news because this is the Spirit’s work, and not within our own power. “It is,” Sarah Coakley writes, “the Spirit’s in- terruption that finally enables full human participation in God.”9 Having been invited, we invite, which is the orienting call for evangelism. This emphasis on evangelism was indeed a hallmark of the early decades of Fuller Seminary, with Fuller professors often spending significant time on their own or with students engaged in spreading the Good News in all sorts of places.10 Shalom does not stop with this, however. Peace with God leads into a new experience with the Spirit in our own lives, something even many Fuller faculty struggled with as they sought to do the Lord’s work in their own energy.11

PEACE WITH OURSELVES

The peace we have is the peace we pass. If we lack peace within, we cannot pass the peace elsewhere. Can we lose this peace once it is given? It seems strangely so. The orientation in peace is an orientation in the Spirit of Sabbath.12 If we are to experience the Spirit, we are given discernment about “all things,” even our own self. Sometimes this Spirit says go and sometimes this Spirit says stop, enabling a life-giving rhythm in our lives instead of exau- sion. The Spirit of holiness is also the Spirit of Sabbath.13 I’ve had to remind myself of this again and again.

This experience with peace is a beginning of liberation, a liberation of perceive oneself entirely, seeing the self in the context of God’s self. In the peace with God that comes from this place, we are led to a new encoun- ter with all of reality, where there is “no less to this fruit of the Spirit is that we, loving God, become true allies, as the source of life is the power of life guiding and empow- ering every step. This is generally called sanctification, but it might better be called enlivening. We begin to see God sees, love as God loves, hope with God’s hope, and that
This experience of enlivening peace itself we become a resonating presence of peace work from God that transforms us so that who find identity in God and confidence in with us. We who experience peace with God, we are to reenter the alternative narratives Pursuing peace apart from participation in the Spirit can be dangerous because good goals can shelter destructive motives. In his book on the Holy Spirit, Moltmann writes: Anyone who wants to fill up his own hollow ness by helping other people will simply spread the same hollowness. Why? Because people are far less influenced by what another person says and does than the activist would like to believe. They are much more influenced by what the other is, and his way of speaking and behaving. Only the person who has found his own self can give himself. What else can be given? It is only the person who knows that he is accepted who can accept others without dominating them. The person who has become free in himself can liberate others and share their suffering.13 An empty person will expect filling from a context and incorporeal patterns of restriction to protect their experience. Passing true peace must derive from the work of the Spirit, rather than other motives or goals, as Moltmann goes on to emphasize. At the same time, such activity must indeed take place, as the Spirit always fills in order to enact transformation in a context. As John Wesley said, “First, God works; therefore you can work. Secondly, God works, therefore you must work.”14 We are filled so as to be involved in this world that God so loves. This is good because the places that need peace are places that are not able to forge their own version of peace, and often such peace seems impossible. Likewise they cannot give us peace in response. We do not need to give in order to receive; we give what we are given by the Spirit and find our meaning sustained in the Spirit’s work. This is why such peace is truly good news in real and living ways. God carries the burden of this peace and establishes this peace in his own self, and this peace enables peace to be possible for the whole world, people and nature together. Peace that is expressed in the power of the Spirit is thus certainly not passive. Peace can and should be disruptive. Not everyone wants peace; indeed, some thrive in the chaos. The early Christians, for instance, offered a contrasting way to the world and the world responded with persecution. “But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us,” Tertul lian wrote. “See how they love one another, for they themselves would sooner put to death.”15 Even in the persecu tion, the early Christians resisted the tempta tion to fight back. In this, they participated in a developing movement of the Spirit that brought more and more into this field of peace, responding to this world in real ways that brought life and hope.

PEACE FOR OTHERS Peace that is with us the peace that is sent with us. We who experience peace with God, who find identity in God and confidence in God’s work in our lives, extend this peace to others. The holistic work of the Spirit is a work from God that transforms us so that we become a resonating presence of peace in, with, and for this world.

Pursuing peace apart from participation in the Spirit can be dangerous because good goals can shelter destructive motives. In his book on the Holy Spirit, Moltmann writes: Anyone who wants to fill up his own hollowness by helping other people will simply spread the same hollowness. Why? Because people are far less influenced by what another person says and does than the activist would like to believe. They are much more influenced by what the other is, and his way of speaking and behaving. Only the person who has found his own self can give himself. What else can be given? It is only the person who knows that he is accepted who can accept others without dominating them. The person who has become free in himself can liberate others and share their suffering.13 An empty person will expect filling from a context and incorporeal patterns of restriction to protect their experience. Passing true peace must derive from the work of the Spirit, rather than other motives or goals, as Moltmann goes on to emphasize. At the same time, such activity must indeed take place, as the Spirit always fills in order to enact transformation in a context. As John Wesley said, “First, God works; therefore you can work. Secondly, God works, therefore you must work.”14 We are filled so as to be involved in this world that God so loves. This is good because the places that need peace are places that are not able to forge their own version of peace, and often such peace seems impossible. Likewise they cannot give us peace in response. We do not need to give in order to receive; we give what we are given by the Spirit and find our meaning sustained in the Spirit’s work. This is why such peace is truly good news in real and living ways. God carries the burden of this peace and establishes this peace in his own self, and this peace enables peace to be possible for the whole world, people and nature together. Peace that is expressed in the power of the Spirit is thus certainly not passive. Peace can and should be disruptive. Not everyone wants peace; indeed, some thrive in the chaos. The early Christians, for instance, offered a contrasting way to the world and the world responded with persecution. “But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us,” Tertul lian wrote. “See how they love one another, for they themselves would sooner put to death.”15 Even in the persecution, the early Christians resisted the temptation to fight back. In this, they participated in a developing movement of the Spirit that brought more and more into this field of peace, responding to this world in real ways that brought life and hope.

CONCLUSION In John 20, we encounter Jesus on the other side of the crucifixion. Now resurrected, his work is indeed finished as well as inaugurat ed in a new way. On the evening of the first day, Easter, Jesus appears to the gathered disciples. As John relates in verse 21, “Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” This chaotic restatement of his promise in John 14 emphasizes that Spirit and peace go together. Now that it is time for the giving of the Spirit, the disciples can take hold of this peace. Having this peace, they are now the ones being sent, sent as Christ was sent, participants in the messianic mission that loves the world and offers peace to the world.

But like the Israelites in the wilderness, the church has often lost sight of God’s promise and sought resolution in less sufficient ways: war, control, division, negotiation, fracturing the unity of the Spirit back into divided factions and competing democratizations. This is our present danger as we wrestle with our identity as evangelicals in today’s world. If diverted, we can easily fall back into trium phalism or apathy and become fractured. We must also avoid both an idealized anthropo logy and an individualized pietism, the old dangers of liberalism on one side and funda mentalism on the other. If we lose our way, if we try to derive peace from our experiences in this world or an isolated religiosity, we lose peace with others and with ourselves, and we lose peace with God. Only the peace from God in the Spirit leads us into the to and fro of love, as Jean Vanier puts it: a love expressed in real relationships and real communities oriented towards reconciliation in all ways that the Spirit offers.15 This is why shalom is a spiral, leading us around and upward together. Life with the Spirit is truly a dance of peace.

Rather than conflict, we have peace. Rather than chaos, we have peace. Rather than frustra tion or anxiety or domination, we have peace. This is not the peace of the world, but a deeper peace, a lasting peace, a thorough peace. It is not just the ceasing of violence and war, it is more; it is an entering into a
rhythm with the Creator of all that is, and living in light of this rhythm. This is truly, thoroughly, good news. This is the gospel, in which we discover not just a message about heaven but a message about all of reality, a reintegration into life with God that transforms our very experience of this world and leads us to resonate this experience back into this world. It is this peace Jesus promises to us. It is this peace that Jesus passes to us in the Spirit, and it is in participating with the Spirit that we pass this peace to others. This is the continuing call of a fuller evangelicalism.

Because Spirit and peace arrive together, peacemaking should be definitive for contemporary approaches of evangelicalism, for understanding of sanctification, for engagement in social activism and advocacy. These have long been part of Fuller Seminary’s institutional story—key elements of the “good ship Fuller” that have kept us afloat throughout the turbulent cultural seas of the last 70 years. Indeed, each of our three schools can be seen as specializing in one of these areas while seeking thorough integration together with them all. This gives us a significant role in leading evangelicalism back into shalom, as we train women and men for leadership and participation in this world in light of the gospel. The promise of peace is not elusive but indeed a promise that was inaugurated with the giving of the Spirit. We need to be reminded and to remind others what Jesus taught, incorporating wisdom about “all things” and reemphasizing the element of peace again and again in all our pursuits.

May this peace be with you. May we be people who, wherever we are, also pass this peace to others.

ENDNOTES
1. This is an extremely streamlined description of what happened. For a more detailed account see George Marsden’s great book, Reforming Fundamentalism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). Over time, the prefix was dropped in most cases, and the movement is more commonly simply called evangelicalism now. However, the prefix is helpful in distinguishing between historical and global forms of evangelicalism.
2. By “fuller” I am intending the contemporary understanding of “being more full,” not the older, traditional term applied to those who prepared cloth. Though it does not take too much of a stretch to include this latter meaning in a figurative way, I’ll not venture into that tab.
7. Marsden, Reforming Fundamentalism, 91.
8. Ibid., 193, notes, “Carnell and Roddy were only the best-known cases from what over the years was a distressingly high number of serious psychological crises or breakdowns among Fuller’s faculty.”
10. See, for instance, Isaiah 6:11–14.
11. See Galatians 5.
Golden Vision – Agape by Makoto Fujimura, private collection, gold and mineral pigments on kumohada, 3’ x 6’, 2015

Mako’s work has been within the traditional Japanese painting style known as nihonga, a contemplative painting practice using pigments from natural sources. As numerous layers of pigments accumulate over time, the colors take on a vibrant, multidimensional quality, evoking the qualities of a Christian life—such as agape, the concept represented here. See more of Mako’s art on pp. 2–3 and 98–99.
There is an undeniable strangeness about much traditional exegesis. Yet the more we ponder it and weigh the intentions of our predecessors, the more we may find that their strangeness is also strangely familiar. That strangeness may harbor surprises for us about the past, and it may offer unlooked-for readings of Scripture that draw us out of ourselves into other Christian minds and other epochs of Christian churches and Christian culture. We need such encounters and such conversations. We may return from the past unpersuaded, but we will not return unchanged.

John L. Thompson, professor of historical theology and Gaylen and Susan Byker Professor of Reformed Theology, from his book Reading the Bible with the Dead.

The practice of reading Scripture is not about learning how to mold the biblical message to contemporary lives and modern needs. Rather, the Scriptures yearn to reshape how we comprehend our lives and identify our greatest needs. We find in Scripture who we are and what we might become, so that we come to share its assessment of our situation, encounter its promise of restoration, and hear its challenge to serve God’s good news.


A commentary is a seasoned work of a lot of reflection and teaching. . . . What it tries to do is to give my understanding of the gospel as I read it and as the words run—the way the narrative goes—what is this gospel about? What is it bearing witness to?

Marianne Meye Thompson, George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament, from a lecture on her completed commentary on the gospel of John—available online.

“What does it mean to give proper attention to the ancient Near Eastern nature of the Hebrew Scriptures? Minimally it means reading other ancient Near Eastern texts. The Scriptures are exceedingly ‘respiratory’: they breathe in the culture of their times, and breathe it back out in a different form. To the reader who learns to breathe the same air—the one who becomes familiar with the context—it is increasingly hard to believe that he or she once read the Bible without. Reading the Hebrew Scriptures in context is intoxicating, like breathing pure oxygen: everything is clearer and sharper, and the energy is immeasurably higher.”

Christopher B. Hays, in Hidden Riches: A Sourcebook for the Comparative Study of the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East. Hays leads an immersion course, Experiencing the Land of the Bible, on site in Israel; read more from him online.
it is scripture alone that makes the life of the faithful clearer

SOLA SCRIPTURA

“Every drop of scripture dilates the eyes of our hearts, Exposing both healthy and sick parts. So when we refuse to engage or let it transform our minds, The only other option is to live life as though blind. These written words are set apart from all others Because they teach us how to be better neighbors & strangers, leaders & followers, fathers & mothers. It is scripture alone that makes the life of the faithful clearer. It is scripture alone that guides the life of every believer.”

+ Jeanette Austin (MDiv ’13), operations director for Fuller’s Pannell Center for African American Church Studies, and Philip Allen Jr., pastor and poet, in an excerpt from their five-part spoken word piece commissioned for the Five Solas Project. Organized by the Brehm Center’s Fred Bock Institute of Music, directed by Ed Willmington, this project, which celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, interprets the five commitments of the reformers (here, “sola scriptura”) through a variety of artistic forms. Learn more about the five solas—and hear spoken word, solo piano, and more—online.

LIVED HERMENEUTICS

“The way the church lives out its corporate life in the world and the form that life takes constitute a hermeneutical activity—the people of God interpret Scripture by the way they shape their life together. In this sense, there is no timeless or universal essence the church must express; rather, under God it constitutes itself afresh in each generation—it must become, theologically, a real presence.”

+ William A. Dyrness, senior professor of theology and culture, from his book Poetic Theology. Read an excerpt online.

THE IMMEDIACY OF THE WORD

“A seminary education will teach us to attend to the context of 2,000 years ago, but there’s sometimes a danger in which an overemphasis on the context behind the text doesn’t allow us to appreciate the living and dynamic character of the text. There’s an immediacy in which the Bible stories are also maps for our stories. The Pentecostal testimony allows us to experience the living and dynamic character of the Word of God as it addresses our existential conditions today that can only be complemented by an understanding that seminary gives us of the world behind the text.”

+ Amos Yong, director of the Center for Missiological Research, reorienting the study of Scripture from a historical document to a dynamic encounter in the present. Watch more of his reflections online. In the image above: Bread for the Journey, by Jonathan Ashe, depicts the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending on a modern city, bringing the historical event of Pentecost into the present day. Commissioned by Urban Doxology, a reconciling music and arts ministry, the work was projected on walls during the 2017 Culture Care Summit. Learn more online.
“Since all readings of Scripture employ theological assumptions about God and how we learn of his purposes, we should welcome the opportunity to explore and learn from theological options from other places and times. Since we all belong to a common body of Christ, we should welcome the opportunity to read Scripture with those other believers. This engaged and faithful reading of Scripture seems more attractive to non-Western Christians than the barren space where the diversity of interpretations enriches a shared life of faith.

Reading Scripture with Other Places and Times: Major Moments in Exegesis

1250
1250: Stephen Langdon divides the Bible into chapters.

1340
1340: The Ordinary Class, the standard commentary on Scripture, is printed.

1455
1455: Robert Stephanus develops the verses scheme still in use today.

1521
1521: Martin Luther responds to hinay causru at the Diet of Worms, saying, “Here I stand, I can do no other.”

1550
1550: The Geneva Bible is published.

1568
1568: The Pauper’s Bible, a picture-only version often used for illiterate Christians, is printed.

1600
1600: John Dathan divides the Bible into chapters.

1611
1611: Erasmus publishes the first historical critique of the Greek New Testament, the Novum Testamentum Graece.

1633
1633: The Scots Bible, and English version, is printed.

1839
1839: William Carey publishes the first Bible in Marathi, India.

1887
1887: The Dead Sea Scrolls are discovered.

1947
1947: The Ordinary Gloss, the standard commentary on Scripture, is published.

With help from John Thompson, professor of historical theology and Gajen and Susan Byker Professor of Reformation Theology, this timeline reflects important dates in the development of the English Bible. See the resource list for a list of Fuller faculty involved in Bible translations.

“Teaching Sunday school at my church pushes me to be in Scripture, to read theology, and to keep thinking about my own vocation as a psychologist in relationship to those things. It puts me in conversation with people on a weekly basis around Scripture—oftentimes people who disagree with me and who I disagree with. I’ve realized over time that it’s shaping in me the virtue of hospitality.”

Brad D. Strawn, Evelyn and Frank Freed Professor of the Integration of Psychology and Theology, reflecting on the role of community in shaping his engagement with Scripture. Watch more online.

“By gathering together as a community and reading Scripture together, people can go through the whole Bible in well under two years. It is my belief that the Communal Reading of Scripture project will help the church learn how to feast on the Word communally, to be fed and nourished by the God who speaks to his children through the Word.”

Bill Hwang (at left), a trustee of Fuller Seminary, reflecting on the power of reading Scripture in community. Hwang has partnered with Ted Rohrer (at right) of Fuller’s Leadership Formation Platform, and FULLER Studio to create the Communal Reading of Scripture project. Fuller’s new commitment to facilitate people all over the world reading and hearing the Scriptures together. Learn more online.
Wisdom from above! It comes in many forms. All of them involve firm dependence on God, without whom all of life will turn foolish. . . . Nothing we do, in word or deed, shows as clearly that we have learned wisdom’s high lessons as when we pray. Wisdom begins with the fear of God; the fear of God begins in prayer.”

David Allan Hubbard, Fuller’s third president—for whom the Hubbard Library (pictured) is named—in The Book of James: Wisdom that Works. Speaking at the dedication of the library in 2009, Marianne Meye Thompson, George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament, said of Dr. Hubbard, “For him, ‘Christian’ was the noun and ‘intellectual’ the adjective, and not the other way. Intellectual work and academic endeavor were to be put into the service of the church and ministry, and this is what David taught and modeled.” In this spirit, imagery of the library is used throughout this section that reflects on wisdom in its many forms—all in the service of the church.

“Human minds are not sponges. . . . It’s more like a landscape or an ecosystem where certain things are going to grow in certain places but not others; certain ideas are going to be easier for human minds to process than others. These natural propensities that undergird religious thought are part of the ordinary equipment that humans have regardless of culture. . . . human minds are a fertile soil for plants we might call ‘religious.’ Culture gets to decide which plants are going to grow to a certain extent, but the plants are going to grow.”

Justin L. Barrett, professor of psychology and chief project developer for the Office for Science, Theology, and Religious Initiatives (STAR), reflecting on the ways wisdom, religion, and cognitive science intersect. Watch more online.

“Philosophical reflection is sustained by that which religion in its own way seeks to realize: love—the love of God, the love for God, and the love of human beings for one another. When brought together in disability perspective, wisdom and love are neither merely theoretical notions nor theological speculations, rather, they become the stuff by which philosophical reflection is supposed to be transformed so that the world might be changed.”

Marianne Meye Thompson, George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament, from John: A Commentary. Listen online to her reflect on the process of writing the commentary.

“Wisdom and word are particularly apt figures in the development of Johannine Christology since neither wisdom nor word was considered a being or entity separable from God, such as an angel or prophet, who may choose to do God’s will or not. Both wisdom and word refer to something that belongs to and comes from God, something inward or peculiar to God that is external-ly expressed. . . . To speak of Jesus as God’s word is to say that he is God’s self-expression, God’s thought or mind, God’s interior word spoken aloud, or in John’s description, made flesh.”

Marianne Meye Thompson, George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament, from John: A Commentary. Listen online to her reflect on the process of writing the commentary.

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Marianne Meye Thompson, director of the Center for Missiological Research and professor of theology and mission, in his essay “Disability and the Love of Wisdom.” Read more on abletheology online.
WISDOM + SUFFERING
“The mood of Job and Ecclesiastes is questioning. And the key expression of that questioning is their concern with death and with suffering, for these are two key human experiences, which threaten to subvert the confidence of wisdom. To put it another way, if wisdom cannot embrace these realities, if it cannot speak to these, then it subverts its own capacity to speak to anything else.”

John Goldingay, David Allan Hubbard Professor of Old Testament

WISDOM + INTUITION
“African proverbs . . . offer observations that are true as general rules but may not fit every case. The wise person is the one who knows intuitively which proverb carries the content and nuances most appropriate to a given situation.”

Stan Nussbaum, staff missiologist at Global Mapping International

WISDOM + NEUROPSYCHOLOGY
“Wisdom is a concerted function of the entire brain (and body). It involves judging truly what is right or fitting and being disposed to act accordingly. The impact of specific forms of brain damage or abnormal brain development on judging and acting helps to enlighten us as to the various neural systems and cognitive abilities that contribute to the wisdom of persons.”

Warren S. Brown, professor of psychology and director of the Lee Edward Travis Research Institute

WISDOM + KNOWLEDGE
“Wisdom is, at least partly, an aspect of the kind of intelligence on which adults principally rely—the intelligence that is maintained and/or increased throughout a major portion of adulthood. This part of wisdom is a form of reasoning that relies on a large body of knowledge that is built up through a disciplined regimen of learning over an extended period of time; it is a kind of expertise.”

John Horn, late professor of psychology at the University of Southern California, and Hiromi Masunaga, professor of educational psychology at California State University, Long Beach

WISDOM + EMOTION
“Emotions play a crucial epistemic role in the moral life in their function of recording information. We can think of them as modes of attention enabling us to notice what is morally salient, important, or urgent in ourselves and our surroundings . . . If emotions are antennae, they are antennae that can record with urgency and heat. Emotional data tend to leave tracks deeper than those of cold reason.”

Nancy Sherman, professor of philosophy at Georgetown University

WISDOM + YOUTH
“Wisdom is that domain of human experience that is concerned with the pragmatics of living. All the more important to adolescent development, it is wisdom that presents pragmatic guideposts for living against a context of transcendent meaning and purpose.”

James L. Furrow, Evelyn and Frank Freed Professor of Marital and Family Therapy, and Linda M. Wagener, former faculty member and associate dean of the School of Psychology

WISDOM + MAXIMS
“Maxims have become an established tradition of human language and moral education precisely because they help young learners to store concepts in the mind more efficiently. In this way, maxims serve as metaphorical ‘clothes hangers’ on which to hang concepts—especially concepts that address ideals of self-motivation and moral behavior.”

Arthur Schwartz, professor of leadership studies at Widener University, and F. Clark Power, professor of education at the University of Notre Dame
KRISTA: Wisdom is recognizable and measurable; it’s interactive. You don’t just say “He or she is a wise person,” but you know them by the effect they have on the world and on those around them. In this generation, there is this new longing to connect what you believe and who you are, this language of integrity and authenticity and transparency that has been introduced into our vocabulary as a reflection of that longing. And wisdom does that—it embodies these things we now are recognizing as so essential if we want to be whole.

MARK: I often think of wisdom like a series of sinews that tie flesh and soul and body and mind together in that way you’re describing. It’s an integrated word; it’s never an isolated or autonomous experience. It’s about convergence and communion and connectedness and participation and vision—all those things are brought together.

KRISTA: Unspoken Wisdom: Truths My Father Taught Me
Ray Anderson (Wipf & Stock, 2013)
Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science, and Society
Warmen Brown, ed. (Templeton Foundation Press, 2008)
Walking in the Dark: Step by Step through Job
Daniel Fuller (Lulu.com, 2010)
Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs for Everyone
John Goldingay (Westminster John Knox, 2014)
Beyond Futility: Messages of Hope from the Book of Ecclesiastes
David Allan Hubbard (Eerdmans, 1976)
The Book of James: Wisdom that Works
David Allan Hubbard (W Publishing Group, 1990)
The Wisdom of the Old Testament
David Allan Hubbard (Messiah College, 1992)
Moral Brains: Ecclesiastes through the Lens of Contemporary Film
Robert Johnston (Wipf & Stock, 2011)

“Discerning calling is the long, complicated combination of convictions and context, of passion and prayer, of knowledge and need that seems to tap us on the shoulder and call forth from us an invitation into a process of self-discovery and humility, of taking up and laying down, of embracing and letting go that over time forms a deep, confident conviction that, of all things there are to do in the world, ‘This is mine to do.’”
+ Tod Bolsinger, vice president and chief of Fuller’s Leadership Formation Platform and assistant professor of practical theology, in his essay “Forrest, Not Found,” available online.

“BIBLICAL WISDOM IS THE TRUTH AND CHARACTER OF GOD LIVED IN CONTEXT.”
+ Mark Labberton, president

MARK: President Mark Labberton speaks with a broad spectrum of leaders on issues at the intersection of theology and culture on his podcast Conversing. In one of its first episodes the对话者是 Krista Tippett, founder and host of the public radio program and podcast On Being, on the role of wisdom in shaping public discourse. Listen to their whole conversation online.

Resources
Unspoken Wisdom: Truths My Father Taught Me
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Understanding Wisdom: Sources, Science, and Society
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The Wisdom of the Old Testament
David Allan Hubbard (Messiah College, 1992)
Moral Brains: Ecclesiastes through the Lens of Contemporary Film
Robert Johnston (Wipf & Stock, 2011)

Available Classes
Job and Human Suffering with various faculty
Wisdom Traditions in the Old Testament with various faculty
“As demonstrated by the cross, God speaks a Word that takes on a body—the created community born by Christ himself. The Word has become incarnate. It desires to have a body and thus moves inherently toward the church by its own gracious initiative and power. Preachers are called to follow the free and gracious movement of the Word through the scriptural witness and into the life of the church for the sake of the world.”

Michael Pasquarello III, Lloyd John Ogilvie Professor of Preaching, speaking at his installation on the sacramental nature of preaching. Dr. Pasquarello helps oversee Fuller’s PhD in Worship and Preaching; learn more and listen to his installation address online. Pictured at right: Evelyne Reisacher, associate professor of Islamic studies and intercultural relations, preaches at InterVarsity’s 2015 Urbana conference. Hers is one of many voices on Fuller’s new podcast FULLER sermons—available on iTunes, Google Play, and Fuller.edu/Studio.

“The integral task of preaching, therefore, is to help the church see that God’s words and actions in Scripture are consistent with God’s active presence today. In doing so, preaching invites believers to join and participate in God’s unfolding theodrama.”

Ahmi Lee, assistant professor of preaching, from her dissertation “Toward a Theodramatic Homiletic.” Listen to her preach on the FULLER sermons podcast.

“Perhaps they expected that it would be just another service—the ritual would be performed, including the reading of the sacred texts, and they would nod their heads in approval as the young preacher read from an ancient passage. What they did not expect was that the Word of God would be fulfilled in their hearing, that God would become present in the Word, that the yesterdays of their cultural prejudices would be recast into the today of the Spirit, and that they would be invited to dance to the Spirit’s invitation to celebrate the wideness of God’s mercy.”


“A role for preaching is to continue the conversation the congregation is already having with Scripture and God. Preaching that is a part of a congregational conversation must encourage and allow all types of questions. Even weeks later, the conversation may still continue.”

“Our calling is to allow the biblical text or passage to have its full impact on us. As passionate preachers we have the privilege of living in the passage and letting it speak to us before we speak about it to the congregation. We can lead others only so far as we have gone ourselves; we cannot give away what we don’t have. Truth and reality, faith and experience, discovery and application, never should be separated.” — Lloyd John Ogilvie, preacher and longtime friend of the Fuller community, in his classic book A Passionate Calling. Learn more about the Brehm Center’s Ogilvie Institute for Preaching online.

“This work of making connections in gospel address makes no claim to exhibit exhaustive political, social, cultural, or economic analysis. It only claims to see the lines that run from structures to bodies, from macroprocesses to the tears and cries of individuals or groups of people. . . . Those who speak this gospel word know that public space is holy space, where a God made flesh walks among the crowd.” — Willie Jennings (MDiv ’87), associate professor of systematic theology and Africana studies at Yale Divinity School, in his book Speaking Gospel in the Public Arena. Listen to Jennings on Mark Labberton’s podcast Conversing.

“Local congregations need a strategy to reinforce the preacher’s message, keep God’s Word fresh in people’s minds, and provide mechanisms and structures for feedback and accountability. Having heard God’s Word, people need help so that they may allow it to continue to impact their hearts and lives.” — Robert K. Perkins (MDiv ’91), senior pastor at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, in his book Bringing Home the Message: How Community Can Multiply the Power of the Preached Word.

“There is for me a way of preaching that loosens itself from the heightened rational faculties we are all so good at and enters into a simplicity of focus, freedom, relinquishment, and abandonment in which I as a preacher am not preaching at people, not for people, but we are together in the moment, in the Spirit. And while I may be the one speaking, I have become the voice of us all, and the voice of Jesus Christ who is for and among us all.” — Chris Neufeld-Erdman, pastor of Davis Community Church, in his book Ordinary Preacher, Extraordinary Gospel: A Daily Guide for Wise, Empowered Preachers.

“It is time for those of us who preach to reimagine our task as one that contributes to a process of repairing, reconciling, and renewing a global community that has been torn and bruised by the ongoing imperial tug of war. It is also time to celebrate what God has done and is doing to bring good out of a troubled human history.” — Joni S. Sancken, assistant professor of homiletics at United Theological Seminary, in her book Stumbling Over the Cross: Preaching the Cross and Resurrection Today.

“The task of the preacher is to listen to the Word with a humble reverence, anxious to understand it, and resolved to believe and obey what we come to learn and understand. At the same time, we preachers listen to the world with critical alertness, anxious to understand it just as intimately, and resolved not necessarily to believe and obey it, but to sympathize with it and to seek grace to discover how the gospel relates to the world.” — Trygve David Johnson, in his book The Preacher as Liturgical Artist: Metaphor, Identity, and the Vicarious Humanity of Christ.

“Set within the context of worship, the sermon has a unique opportunity to offer a transformative tuning note that can help interpret and reorient the congregation’s corporate actions and witness as well as guiding individual members in personal discipleship.” — Sarah Travis, minister of the chapel at Knox College, in her book Decolonizing Preaching: The Pulpit as Postcolonial Space.

“Those who speak this gospel word know that public space is holy space, where a God made flesh walks among the crowd.” — Willie Jennings
"Preaching has to flow from a walk—a walk that’s authentic, that’s real..."

"The real power of preaching does not lie in the personal characteristics of the speaker or the skillful way in which the sermon is crafted and presented, but rather in the work of God’s Spirit. Faith rests in divine power rather than human wisdom. Human words do not have the ability to change lives. Human eloquence and human wisdom do not lead to salvation. Human reasoning is not the basis of faith in God."

— Albert Tate, pastor of Fellowship Monrovia, reflects on pastoral authenticity with President Mark Labberton on Conversing, a podcast in which he interviews a broad spectrum of leaders on issues at the intersection of theology and culture.

"When a preacher reads and interprets Scripture in community—especially in diverse community—they are able to engage in new questions and new ideas, leading to a far deeper understanding than preconceived notions of truth. As each individual’s understanding is layered on top of the next, the holes begin to fill in, and the whole truth of God’s grace begins to emerge.”

— Jennifer Ackerman, director of operations for the Ogilvie Institute and the director of Micah Groups, a program that forms preachers in a diverse community of ministry peers to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Learn more online.

SPIKE.
The easiest way to bring science into sermons is to use it to spark the attentions of the congregation.

CORROBORATE.
A slightly deeper use of science is to support or corroborate a theological point that is a bit stronger when you bring in the science.

ILLUSTRATE.
Find a metaphor or illustration from science can sometimes help communicate challenging theological ideas or make them more relatable.

EXECUTE.
In the process of exegeting a biblical text, it often helps to have an original understanding of the text. Various sciences can help us get into the minds of those ancient people and draw relevant comparisons to us today.

NOTIFY.
Science is good at notifying us of concerning problems that may not be easy to notice and if sometimes gives us guidance regarding possible solutions.

CLAIM.
Often biblical theology presents us with multiple ways to understand Scripture or doctrine. Sciences can help mediate between plausible alternatives and clarify theological truths.

EMERGE.
The deep involvement between science and a theology allows it to enhance theological inquiry and insight.

— Justin Barrett, professor of psychology and chief project developer for Fuller’s Office for Science, Theology, and Religion initiatives (STAR), sharing pointers for synthesizing sermons with science. For more online about these methods to incorporate science into sermons.

Resources

Preaching Gospel: Essays in Honor of Richard Lischer
Charles L. Campbell et al. (Cascade Books, 2016)

Shuffling Over the Cross: Preaching the Cross and Resurrection Today
Jere S. Stammen (Cascade Books, 2016)

Youthful Preaching: Strengthening the Relationship Between Youth, Adults and Preaching
Richard West (Cascade Books, 2016)
The Preacher as Liturgical Artist: Metaphor, Identity, and the Vicarious Humanity of Christ
Tracy David Johnson (Cascade Books, 2016)

Blessed and Beautiful Multicultural Churches and the Preaching that Sustains Them
Lisa Washington Lamb (Cascade Books, 2014)

The Eloquence of Grace: Joseph Stilts and the Preaching Life
James Childs Jr. and Richard Lischer, eds. (Cascade Books, 2013)

Bringing Home the Message: How Community Can Multiply the Power of the Preached Word
Robert Permut (Cascade Books, 2016)

Reconsidering Preaching: The Pulpit as Postcolonial Space
Sarah Traun (Cascade Books, 2014)

Chris Neuendorf-Erdman (Cascade Books, 2016)

Available Classes

Contemporary Options for Preaching & Teaching Today with A. J. Swoboda
History of Worship and Preaching with Michael Pasquarello III
Narrative Communication in a Visual Age with Ken Fong
Preaching Practicum with Michael Pasquarello III and various faculty
Preaching and Teaching the Old Testament with John Goldsby
Preaching as an Integrative Focus in Ministry (101S/104S)
Preaching for Occasions: Weddings, Funerals, Griev, and Evangelistic Opportunities with Lisa Lamb
Preaching in the Tradition(s) with Paul Boks
Preaching the Bible as Scripture with Michael Pasquarello III
The Formation of the Preacher with Michael Pasquarello III and Will Willimon
Transformational Preaching in Asian American Contexts with Ken Fong
NEW FULLER FACULTY

EUWAN CHOU
Academic Director for the Korean Doctor of Ministry Program and Associate Professor of Christian Ministry
Dr. Chou joined Fuller in 2012 as an assistant director and theological mentor of the MDMin program, having previously served as the Korean MDMin director and a faculty member at Luther Rice University/Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. He also served as senior pastor of Namwon Christian Korean Baptist Church in South Korea for ten years.

CLIFTON R. CLARK
Associate Dean, Panell Center for Asian American Church Studies and Associate Professor of Black Church Studies and World Christianity
Coming to Fuller from Regent University School of Divinity, Dr. Clark, an ordained elder in the Church of God, brings scholarly, pastoral, and mission expertise to serve Fuller’s mission to form global leaders for kingship vocations. He has taught and taught taught taught taught taught focused the Fuller Institute for Teaching and NorthWest Church in Seattle for four years, helping local churches engage the marketplace, arts, and culture of the region.

MATTHEW KAEMINGS
Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics
Dr. Kaemings’ research and teaching focus on Islam and political ethics, faith and the workplace, theology and culture, and Reformed political theology. Recently relocating to Fuller Texas, he has previously authored and directed the Fuller Institute for Teaching and NorthWest Church in Seattle for four years, helping local churches engage the marketplace, arts, and culture of the region.

KIRSTEIN WONG
Professor of Theology and World Christianity
Dr. Wong joined Fuller after serving as full professor at Loyola University New Orleans in the School of Theology, where she taught courses that emphasize teaching in South Korea and India. Doing theology from the context of world Christianity for missional purposes, Kim brings a deeply experienced theology. Recently relocating to Fuller Texas, he previously founded and directed the Fuller Institute for Theology and Northwest Culture in South Korea and India. Doing theology from the context of world Christianity for missional purposes, Kim brings a deeply experienced

SEBASTIAN C. H. KIM
Executive Director of the Korean Studies Center and Professor of Theology and Public Life
Loading: Fuller's new Korean Studies Center. Dr. Kim comes from Yonsei University in Seoul where he served for 12 years, having previously taught at the University of Cambridge and Oxford Biblical Seminary in India. His scholarly interests include public theology, world Christianity, Asian theologies, and peacebuilding.

DANIEL D. LEE
Director, Center for Asian American Theology and Ministry and Assistant Professor of Theology and Asian American Ministry
For the last three years, Dr. Lee has served in various roles to establish the Asian American Center and develop Asian American courses and programs. Delivered as a Presbyterian minister with broad ministry experience, he focuses his research on the Reformed tradition and contextualized theology.

SEAN M. LOVE
Associate Director of Clinical Doctoral and Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology
Dr. Love administers clinical field training placements for students and works to help them develop professionally, also assisting practicum students in providing quality training. His research interests center on the influence of trauma on spirituality and conceptions of God, and he has taught and taught focused the Fuller Institute for Teaching and NorthWest Church in Seattle for four years, helping local churches engage the marketplace, arts, and culture of the region.

RECENT FACULTY BOOKS

Reading Jesus’ Bible: How the New Testament Testifies How We Understand the Old Testament
John Gallagher (Eerdmans, 2017)
Christian Understandings of the Trinity: The Triological Triad
Nel-Mari Kallukkian (Fortress Press, 2017)
The Dogma of God: A Global Perspective, 2nd ed.
Nel-Mari Kallukkian (Eerdmans, 2017)

RECENT FACULTY ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

STEVEN ARGUE
“Connecting with College Students Over Break: Bringing Home More Than News,” Fuller Youth Institute Blog (May 7, 2017), “When Their Storms Become Gales: Chasing the Distance Between Leaders and Young People,” Fuller Youth Institute Blog (February 17, 2017); RISTOLI, BARBARA
, with S. Winters, W. M. Griss, and J. S. (The Impact of Parenting on Emotional Regulation during Childhood and Adolescence,” Child Development Perspectives (published online June 5, 2017); STEVEN ARGUE
, “Connecting with College Students Over Break: Bringing Home More Than News,” Fuller Youth Institute Blog (May 7, 2017); KENNETH T. WANG

FULLER MAGAZINE | FULLER.EDU/STUDIO 97
2017 | ISSUE #9 SHALOM
In the Christian calendar, the Feast of Epiphany celebrates the incarnation and gifts of the Magi. This painting both references the holiday and becomes its own form of epiphany—an evoking of wisdom, gift, and grace.

See more of Mako’s work on pp. 2–3 and 76–77.
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY is one of the world’s most influential evangelical institutions, the largest multidenominational seminary, and a leading voice for faith, civility, and justice in the global church and wider culture. With deep roots in orthodoxy and branches in innovation, we are committed to forming Christian women and men to be faithful, courageous, innovative, collaborative, and fruitful leaders who will make an exponential impact for Jesus in any context.

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El Seminario Teológico Fuller es una de las instituciones evangélicas más influyentes del mundo, el seminario teológico más grande y una voz principal para la fe, la civilidad y la justicia en la iglesia global y la cultura en general. Con excesos profundos en la ortodoxia y ramas en innovación, nos comprometemos a formar mujeres cristianas y hombres cristianos a tener más posibilidades, valor, innovación, colaboración y a ser líderes de éxito que tendrían un impacto esencial para Jesús en cualquier contexto.

Fuller ofrece 17 programas de estudio en 7 localidades—con opciones en Español, Coreano, y clases en línea—a través de nuestras facultades de Teología, Psicología y Estudios Interculturales juntamente con 20 centros, institutos e iniciativas. Aproximadamente 4,000 estudiantes de 90 países y 110 denominaciones ingresan anualmente a nuestros programas y nuestros 43,000 ex alumnos y ex alumnas han aceptado el llamado a servir en el ministerio, la consejería, educación, lauros, en organizaciones sin fines de lucro, los negocios y en una multitud de diferentes vocaciones alrededor del mundo.

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Fuller offers 17 degree programs at 7 campuses—with Spanish, Korean, and online options—through our Schools of Theology, Psychology, and Intercultural Studies, as well as 20 centers, institutes, and initiatives. Approximately 4,000 students from 90 countries and 110 denominations enroll in our programs annually, and our 43,000 alumni have been called to serve as ministers, counselors, teachers, artists, nonprofit leaders, businesspersons, and in a multitude of other vocations around the world.

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¿Qué es Fuller?

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Fuller.edu/MAT